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Security Council

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Provisional

7432nd meeting

Thursday, 23 April 2015, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II/Mr. Judeh/ Mr. Hmoud/Mrs. Kawar	(Jordan)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Augusto
	Chad	Mr. Cherif
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	France	Mr. Kanner
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
	Malaysia	Mr. Zainuddin
	New Zealand	Mr. McLay
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Spain	Mr. Ybáñez
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

The role of youth in countering violent extremism and promoting peace

Letter dated 27 March 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2015/231)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Maintenance of international peace and security

The role of youth in countering violent extremism and promoting peace

Letter dated 27 March 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2015/231)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I wish to welcome the Secretary-General, Ministers and the other representatives present in the Security Council Chamber. Their participation is an affirmation of the importance of the subject matter under discussion.

In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Afghanistan, Albania, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Egypt, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Guatemala, Hungary, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Maldives, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, the Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, the Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Arab Emirates to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this briefing: Mr. Peter Neumann and Mr. Scott Atran.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Téte António, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations; His Excellency Mr. Thomas Mayr-Harting, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations; and His Excellency Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, United Nations High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, to participate in this meeting.

I propose that the Council invite the Permanent Observer of the Observer State of the Holy See to the United Nations to participate in this meeting, in accordance with the provisional rules of procedure and the previous practice in this regard.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/231, which contains the text of a letter dated 27 March 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General: I am honoured by the presence of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II of Jordan, whose delegation has so ably led the Security Council this month. His Royal Highness is the youngest person ever to preside over a meeting of the Council. That is perfect for today's discussion. He is not yet 21 years old, but he is already a leader in the twenty-first century. I thank him for presiding over this important meeting.

I am deeply grateful to Jordan for its many contributions to the United Nations on peace, development and human rights. I especially appreciate the many Jordanians serving as my senior advisers, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein; the Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, Ms. Rima Khalaf; the Assistant Secretary-General at the United Nations Development Programme, Ms. Sima Bahous; and my Envoy on Youth, Mr. Ahmad Alhendawi, who is with me here today.

The role of youth lies at the heart of international peace and security. We have to encourage young people to take up the causes of peace, diversity and mutual respect. Youth represent promise, not peril. While some young people do commit heinous acts of violence, the overwhelming majority yearn for peace, especially in conflict situations.

Many of those who commit violence are victimized by depraved adults who abuse youthful innocence. Over and over, we see young people bearing the brunt of violent extremism. We cannot forget the girls in Chibok, Nigeria. We remember the students killed by Al-Shabaab in Garissa, Kenya, as well as those massacred by the Taliban in Peshawar, Pakistan.

Violent extremists deliberately target youth for exercising their human rights. I am distressed by the

tragedy of young people who are conscripted, kidnapped and killed. But I am also impressed by young people who survive war and champion peace.

In Sierra Leone a few years ago, I cheered at a football match of amputees who had lost limbs in the conflict. They taught me the true meaning of recovery. Earlier this year, the Security Council heard from a young woman named Ilwad Elman (see S/PV.7374), whose father was a peace activist in Somalia. When he was assassinated, she had to move to Canada. She could have enjoyed a comfortable life there — but she went back to Somalia to lead a non-governmental organization that helped victims of gender-based violence.

I met a Syrian girl in a refugee camp who dreamed of becoming a doctor so that she could help others. My Envoy on Youth, Ahmad Alhendawi, says that young people drive change but they are not in the driver's seat. I agree, and I call for giving them the licence to steer our future. They have idealism, creativity and unprecedented powers to network. They often understand the complexities of war and the requirements for peace.

Here is a message recently posted on Facebook by the Dream Achievers Youth Organization in Kenya:

> "Let all youth across East Africa turn away from joining militia groups and rather focus on solidarity, tolerance and intercultural understanding."

There are countless youth groups that want to wage peace, not war. They want to fight injustice, not people. I applaud those heroes, and especially the heroines. Gender equality is fundamental to combating violent extremism.

Youth suffer on the front lines of war, but they are rarely in the back rooms where peace talks are held. I call for giving young people a seat at the negotiating table. They pay a price for the fighting, and they deserve to help structure the healing. That is essential to lasting stability.

Youth organizations can help in peacebuilding if we scale up their activities and invest in their ideas. Education is critical. I join the call of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Al Huessein for deploying "weapons of mass instruction" to foster a culture of peace. That is more than a clever slogan, it is an effective strategy.

Youth peace groups, especially in conflict-torn areas, deserve our unstinting support. Even in peaceful countries, youth policies are underfunded, and they are not applied to security issues. Young people are inheriting the world. With more resources, they can be a force for peace, reconciliation and democratic governance.

The United Nations is working to listen to youth and to respond to their concerns. We have launched the Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding. I thank the Peacebuilding Support Office, the Alliance of Civilizations and the United Nations agencies and partners that contributed. I am also developing a comprehensive plan of action to prevent violent extremism that will seek to engage and empower youth, which I will submit it to the General Assembly later this year.

Too often, the speeches in the Security Council focus on problems in the search for solutions. Today, let us see young people as the solution to our most vexing problems. They yearn for a more just and peaceful world, and, with our help, they can create it.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Neumann.

Mr. Neumann: My name is Peter Neumann. I am a professor of security studies Kings College, London, and I am also Director of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization. I appreciate this opportunity to talk about the causes of youth radicalization, and I commend the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for holding today's debate.

I have dedicated the past 17 years of my life to studying and understanding the process and the causes of radicalization. It is what I have been doing day in day out. It is what has kept me awake many nights. I was born in Germany, and I have always struggled to understand how people from my own country, with the history we have and the atrocities and wars that we have caused, how young people from my country — a very small number, but still, some of my compatriots — could still be attracted to a neo-Nazi ideology.

When I was a student, I spent a year studying in Belfast, Northern Ireland. It was 1997-1998, the last year of the conflict. The conflict was winding down and peace was coming. Yet the scars of conflict were everywhere, and I was looking for the cause.

When 911 happened, in this city, it seemed far away to me. But, four years later, in 2005, terrorists struck in London, where I was by then living and working as an academic. The terrorists who attacked London were not from the Middle East, they were not from a zone of conflict, they were from England. They had bee been born in England, they grew up and went to school there, they had British passports and they spoke English with a better accent than I do, even when I try. What made them do it?

Let me say straightaway — and I am now speaking as an academic — that there is not a single reason why young people radicalize. There is not a single root cause. Radicalization is a process. It is the process whereby people, often mostly young people, turn to extremism — sometimes violent extremism. It is a process that can occur in any society, and as such it does not have a specific cause. It is conflicts that have causes.

If you make a list of every grievance expressed in every conflict in which youth radicalization has occurred, you end up with a very long list indeed. You will end up with a list that includes, in essence, every problem in the world. At that point it becomes difficult, because — as I know and as the members of the Security Council know better than everyone else — it is neither possible nor realistic to expect politicians, policymakers, diplomats or even the United Nations to solve every problem in the world. Let me say it one more time: youth radicalization as such does not have one specific cause everywhere, but conflicts do.

Instead of talking about the causes of radicalization in general, what I would like to talk about one specific conflict, and one specific population within that conflict. The people I want to talk about are foreign terrorist fighters from my continent, the continent of Europe. They are foreign fighters who have gone to Syria and Iraq to join the organization that calls itself Daesh. They are mostly young people from cities like Berlin, Paris, Stockholm and London — citizens of our countries, up to 4,000 of them who have joined a totalitarian organization that chops off people's heads and burns them alive.

My colleagues and I at the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence in London have been interested in these people for over two years. We know many of them. We have found 700 of them on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Tumblr — social media platforms where they are posting news and updates, comments and pictures. We have spoken to nearly 100 of them — some over the course of several months — and we have met face to face with many facilitators, transporters, sheikhs and, of course, the fighters themselves on the ground in the border towns from where they enter Syria.

We know these people. We know their stories, and we know that there is not just one story. There are many stories. Some of them are pious, but others not. Many have troubled histories, but some would have had decent prospects had they stayed in their European home countries. Some were driven by the humanitarian suffering of the Syrian people; others were seeking thrill and adventure. And, of course, many were extremists to begin with; they had been extremists long before the conflict in Syria started. So when it comes to their basic characteristics and, if you will, socioeconomic profiles, we are dealing with an incredibly diverse group of people — more diverse than any extremist population that I have seen. It is so diverse that it now includes, for the first time in this particular group, large numbers of women: 10, 15 and, in some countries, 20 per cent females. So what do they have in common?

There is an uncomfortable truth here for my European compatriots. However different the foreign fighters my colleagues and I have found and spoken to may be; however different their profiles and characteristics, what many, if not most of them, have in common is that they do not feel that they have a stake in their societies. They have often felt that, because of who they are, how they look and where their parents or grandparents came from, they still were not part of us, they were not European, they did not belong, and they would never succeed in Europe however hard they tried. And if you do not feel you belong; if you do not feel that you are part of your society, it becomes easier to leave and it becomes easier to hate, and it becomes easier to go against the very society whose passport you hold and whose language you speak.

Let me make this very clear. Feeling excluded on its own does not explain why you become a foreign terrorist fighter, and it certainly does not justify it. Nothing justifies terrorism. Just because you have been discriminated against, just because you lack economic opportunity, or just because people insult your religion does not automatically, by osmosis, make you go to Syria and chop people's heads off. If it were that simple, we would have not 4,000 Europeans down there, but 4 million And I thank God we do not.

There are a lot of other factors involved in youth radicalization. An ideology needs to come in, make sense of the grievance and channel it into a particular direction. Groups, social dynamics and charismatic leaders play an important role too. But what I am trying to say is that exclusion — that sense of not feeling you belong or part of your own society — opens your mind. It opens your mind to an ideology that says, "The West is at war with you; Europe is at war with you; your country is at war with you; you cannot live among these people; you cannot be European and Muslim at the same time."

Because that is exactly what the recruiters are saying; that is what Daesh videos on the Internet are saying. And it resonates with some. It resonates not because Daesh has magical powers of persuasion or because the videos are produced so well. It resonates because it makes sense of people's state of mind. It gives them the answer they were looking for. It turns a grievance into a cause — one that gives meaning and significance. It is weirdly empowering, as hard as that may be for a lot of us her today to understand. A sense of exclusion is not what causes it, but it is the precondition for everything that follows.

How do we stop it? There are lots of things we need to do. There is a lot of firefighting — stopping people from travelling, arresting them, and sharing information. Some of these measures are outlined in resolution 2178 (2014), which I had the honour to work on with Ambassador Power and her team. We need to empower young people to make their own choices as full members of their societies, but we also need to empower parents, especially mothers. They are our strongest allies, and they are often the last ones who still have a degree of influence over their kids. We have often seen how parents have managed to stop their kids from going abroad. We need to create deradicalization programmes that deliver tailored interventions, either when people are on the brink of joining extremist groups, before they travel to Syria, or when they come back. We need to challenge extremist ideas on the Internet, where extremists are incredibly effective and we are not.

But firefighting is not enough. If we want to stop this from happening again and again, we need to work on creating more inclusive societies and more inclusive identities. It is the toughest part of prevention; it is the most costly and the most long-term. But we must do it, because only if more people feel that they belong — that they truly belong — to their European home countries, however they look and whatever religion they practice, only then will we succeed in reducing the pool of people from which violent extremists recruit.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Neumann for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Atran.

Mr. Atran: I thank the Security Council and the Government of Jordan for letting me try to help.

I am an anthropologist. Anthropologists, as a group, study the diversity of human cultures to understand our commonalities and differences, and to use the knowledge of what is common to help us bridge our differences. My research aims to help reduce violence between peoples by first trying to understand thoughts and behaviours as different from my own as any I can imagine, such as suicide bombings that kill masses of people innocent of direct harm to others. The key, as Margaret Mead taught me long ago when I worked as her assistant at the American Museum of Natural History here in New York, was to empathize with people without always sympathizing; to participate in their lives to the extent you feel is morally possible, and then report.

I have spent much time observing, interviewing and carrying out systematic studies among people on six continents who are drawn to violent action for a group and its cause, most recently with colleagues last month in Kirkuk, Iraq, among young men who had killed for the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS), and with young adults in the banlieus of Paris and the barrios of Barcelona who seek to join it. With some insights from social science research, I will try to outline a few conditions that may help move youth from taking the path of violent extremism.

But first, who are these young people? None of the ISIS fighters we interviewed in Iraq had more than primary school education; some had wives and young children. When asked "What is Islam?" they answered "my life". They knew nothing of the Quran or the Hadith, or of the early caliphs Omar and Othman, but had learned of Islam from Al-Qaida and ISIS propaganda, teaching that Muslims like them were targeted for elimination unless they first eliminated the impure. This is not an outlandish proposition in their lived circumstances; they told of growing up after the fall of Saddam Hussein in a hellish world of constant guerrilla war, family deaths and dislocation, and of not

being even able to go out of their homes or temporary shelters for months on end.

In Europe and elsewhere in the Muslim diaspora, the recruitment pattern is different. About three out of every four people who join Al-Qaida or ISIS do so through friends; most of the rest do so through family or fellow travelers in search of a meaningful path in life. It is rare that parents are ever even aware that their children desire to join the movement. In diaspora homes, Muslim parents are reluctant to talk about the failings of foreign policy and ISIS, whereas their children often want desperately to understand.

Most foreign volunteers and supporters fall within the mid-ranges of what social scientists call "the normal distribution" in terms of psychological attributes like empathy, compassion, idealism and wanting mostly to help people rather than to hurt them. They are mostly young people in transitional stages in their lives: students, immigrants between jobs or mates, having left or about to leave their native family and looking for a new family of friends and fellow travelers with whom they can find significance in life. Most have had no traditional religious education, and are often "born again" into a socially tight, ideologically narrow but world-spanning sense of religious mission. Indeed, it is when those who do practice religious ritual are expelled from the mosque — not in it — for expressing radical political beliefs, that the move to violence is most likely.

Last summer, a poll by ICM Research revealed that more than one in four French youth — of all creeds — between the ages of 18 and 24 had a favourable attitude towards ISIS. In Barcelona just this month, 5 of 11 captured ISIS sympathizers who planned to blow up parts of the city were recent atheist or Christian converts. The unholy alliance of narrow xenophobic nationalism and militant jihad, which play off one another's fears, are beginning to destabilize the European middle class much as fascism and communism did in the 1920s and 1930s, while inciting willingness to sacrifice among both nationalist xenophobes and militant jihadis. By contrast, our own research shows that even among native Western youth, ideals of liberal democracy no longer elicit willingness to make costly sacrifices for their defence.

Europe has a birth rate of 1.4 per couple, which means that without massive immigration it cannot sustain a viable middle class, upon which every successful democracy depends. Yet Europe is arguably further from effectively dealing with problems of immigration than ever before. As one young woman from the Paris banlieu of Clichy-sur-Bois told us, she, like so many others she hung out with, felt neither French nor Arab, and because she will always be looked on suspiciously for the acts of others, she would choose the caliphate to help create a homeland where Muslims could pool their resources, be strong again and live in dignity.

But the popular notion of a clash of civilizations between Islam and the West is woefully misleading. Violent extremism represents not the resurgence of traditional cultures, but their collapse, as young people unmoored from millennial traditions flail about in search of a social identity that gives personal significance and glory. That is the dark side of globalization. They radicalize to find a firm identity in a flattened world: where vertical lines of communication between the generations are replaced by horizontal peer-to-peer attachments that can span the globe. Young people whose grandparents were Stone Age animists in Sulawesi, far removed from the Arab world, told me they dreamed of fighting in Iraq or Palestine in defense of Islam.

Although typically viewed in military terms, Al-Qaida, ISIS and related groups pose the greatest threat as the world's most dynamic countercultural movement, one whose values run counter to the nation-State system represented here in the United Nations, and to its Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It has drawn youth from many places into the largest, most potent extraterritorial fighting force since the Second World War. Just as it took more than a decade for Al-Qaida to mature into a global menace, it may be many years before we see the full effect of ISIS, even if it is kicked out of its current territorial base. Unless we understand those powerful cultural forces, we will fail to address the threat. When, as now, the focus is on military solutions and police interdiction, matters have already gone way too far. If that focus remains, we lose the coming generation.

What might therefore be done? Foremost, Governments should continue their important work on problems of development, and on immigration and integration, with a goal of transforming the much-lamented youth bulge into a youth boom by unleashing youth's inherent energy and idealism. But let me propose three conditions that I believe young people need, with brief illustrations. Each country will have to

create and mobilize those conditions, suited to its own circumstances.

The first condition is to offer youth something that makes them dream of a life of significance through struggle and sacrifice in comradeship. That is what ISIS offers. The *Idarat Al-Tawahhush* manifesto — *The Management of Savagery* — states,

> "Fly to us youth from the regions we manage. For the youth of the nation are closer to the innate nature of human beings on account of their rebelliousness within them. And the inert groups, they only try to suppress this."

When I hear yet another tired appeal to moderate Islam, usually from much older folk, I ask, "Are you kidding? Don't any of you have teenage children? When did 'moderate' anything have wide appeal for youth yearning for adventure, glory and significance?"

Members of the Council should ask themselves, "What dreams may come from most current Government policies that offer little beyond promises of comfort and security?" Young people will not choose to sacrifice everything, including their lives — the totality of their self-interests — just for material rewards. In fact, research shows that offering material rewards or punishments, carrots or sticks, may only push truly devoted actors to greater extremes. Research also shows that the greatest predictor of willingness to sacrifice and join comrades in a sacred cause, one that provides a sense of special destiny and the will to fight, is what initially enables initially low-power insurgent and revolutionary groups to resist and often prevail against materially more powerful groups that depend on material incentives, such as armies and police, which in turn rely mainly on pay and promotion rather than a heartfelt duty to defend the nation. Sacred values must be fought with other sacred values, or by sundering the social networks in which those values are embedded.

The second condition is to offer youth a positive personal dream, with a concrete chance of realization. The appeal of Al-Qaida and ISIS is not about jihadi websites, which are mostly blather and bombast, although they can be an initial attractor. It is about what comes after. There are nearly 50,000 Twitter hashtags supporting ISIS, with an average of 1,000 followers each. They succeed by providing opportunities for personal engagement, where people have an audience with whom they can share and refine their grievances, their hopes and their desires. In contrast, Government digital outreach programmes typically provide generic religious and ideological counter-narratives, seemingly deaf to the personal circumstances of their audiences. They cannot create the intimate social networks that dreams need.

Moreover, counter-narrative messaging is mostly negative: "So Daesh wants to build a future?" Well, is beheading a future you want, or someone controlling details of your diet and dress? Can anyone not know that already? Does it really matter to those drawn to the cause despite, or even because of such things? As one teenage girl from a Chicago suburb retorted to United States Federal Bureau of Investigation agents who stopped her from flying to Syria, "Well, what about the barrel bombings that kill thousands? Maybe the beheading helps to stop that." For some, strict obedience provides freedom from uncertainty about what a good person is to do. Besides, once a person is convinced of the mission's moral virtue, then spectacular violence is not a turn off, but sublime and empowering, as Edmund Burke noted about the French Revolution, which introduced the modern notion of terror as an emergency defence of radical political change.

Make no mistake: few if any of those who join militant jihad, or xenophobic nationalisms for that matter, are nihilists. Nihilism is an accusation levelled by those who wishfully refuse, ostrich-style, to consider the moral appeal, and hence the real danger, of such movements. Being willing to die to kill others requires a deep conviction of moral virtue. In Singapore last week, some speaking for Western Governments argued that the caliphate was mythology, covering traditional power politics. Research with those drawn to the cause show that this is a dangerous misconception. The caliphate has re-emerged as a mobilizing cause in the minds of many Muslims. As one imam in Barcelona told us,

> "I am against the violence of Al-Qaida and ISIS, but they have put our predicament in Europe and elsewhere on the map. Before, we were just ignored. And the caliphate, we dream of it like the Jews dreamed of Zion. Maybe it can be a federation, like the European Union, of Muslim peoples. The caliphate is here, in our hearts, even if we don't know what real form it will finally take."

Without recognizing those passions, we risk fanning them. Any serious engagement must be attuned to individuals and their networks, not to mass marketing of repetitive messages. Young people empathize with

each other; they do not lecture at one another. From Syria, a young woman messages another,

> "I know how hard it is to leave behind the mother and father you love, and not tell them until you are here, that you will always love them but that you were put on this Earth to do more than be with or honour your parents. I know this will probably be the hardest thing you may ever have to do, but let me help you explain it to yourself and to them."

We need that kind of engagement.

A third condition is to offer youth the chance to create its own local initiatives. Social science research shows that local initiatives, begun with small-scale involvement, are better than national and large-scale programmes in reducing violence. It does not matter which Government agencies we want to help facilitate this. Let youth engage youth in the search for meaningful ways to make sense of the issues on their personal agenda, whether that be about oppression and political marginalization, lack of economic opportunity, the trauma of exposure to violence, or problems of identity and social exclusion. Most of all, we must support personal engagement, through mutual support and community-based mentors — because it is almost always a particular personal circumstance, shared with friends, that radical extremism probes for, draws out and tries to universalize into moral outrage and violent action.

Allow me to close with this consideration. At just 16, Gulalai Ismail and her sister Saba set up the Seeds of Peace network with a group of school friends to change the lives of young women in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, North-West Pakistan. They began by focusing on women's place in society, and as their membership has grown, they are now training young activists to become local peace-builders, challenging violent extremism. They trained 25 young people in each of the past two years to join together to promote tolerance, non-violence and peace. The initiative is proving so popular that last year they had over 150 applicants. The 50 trained young volunteers are now, in turn, reaching out to people in their communities who are vulnerable to radicalization. They hold study circles and one-on-one meetings with those people to develop and promote ideas for a peaceful future.

Still in its early stages, the programme will reach almost 1,500 young people in the next three years — building a movement of activists against religious and political extremism. The results are really a lot more remarkable than that, but Gulalai Ismail will not claim credit publicly. Imagine a global archipelago of such peace-builders: if you can find concrete ways to help and empower them, without trying too hard to control them, they could well win the future.

In sum, what is most important is quality time and the sustained follow-up of young people with young people, who understand that motivational factors can vary greatly with context and despite commonalities, whether it be for a young father from Kirkuk, a teenage girl from Paris, neighbourhood friends from Tetuan, Morocco, or high-school soccer fans from Fredrikstad, Norway — all seeking and yearning for ISIS. It takes a dynamic movement, at once intimately personal and global — involving not just entrepreneurial ideas, but also physical activity, music and entertainment — to counter the growing global counterculture of violent extremism.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Atran for his briefing.

I would like to express my deepest thanks and appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon for his efforts to realize the goals of the United Nations.

It is an honour to be with other Council members today while my country, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, assumes the presidency of the Security Council for the second time during our current term. I am particularly pleased to be attending this debate on youth in conflict zones and the role of youth in peace-making. The world is facing a formidable challenge, namely, terrorism and extremism, which may be the greatest challenge to world peace and security — with youth being their prime victims.

Today, we are facing a scourge that threatens the entire world. No country is immune from the threat of terrorism, whose enemy is humanity, regardless of religion, gender, age or nationality. The war on terror concerns us all. In the past few decades, the world has witnessed events and conflicts and their consequences that have made an increasing number of young people more susceptible to fall into the darkness of extremism and the traps set by deceitful people. Young people are the most susceptible to voluntary or involuntary recruitment by military, terrorist and extremist groups. Accordingly, urgent measures must be taken to put an end to that bloodshed.

More than half of the world's population is below the age of 30, the majority of whom live in developing countries. Studies show that poverty, unemployment, ignorance and weak familial ties create fertile ground for extremist thought and dismal ideas. If we examine the relevant data, we will find that youth are facing a decisive challenge: across our globe, there are nearly 73 million jobless young men and women and more than 14 million young refugees and displaced persons. In addition, the majority of the victims of armed conflicts are young people.

While youth represent the most vulnerable group in the present situation with its attending consequences, they can also have the strongest impact on the present and the future. That has been evident in the recent events in my region -- the Arab region. As a young man who is part of that generation, I take part in debates about the challenges facing my generation and the need to empower youth. There is much talk about youth being a marginalized segment of society. Allow me to say that they are not a marginalized group, but rather a targeted group. They are targeted for their huge self-confidence and potential ability to change the world. With that drive, they look for opportunities to invest their potential, but when they face a dead-end, their ambition is transformed into frustration, which other groups use to fuel their own agendas. We have to fill that vacuum that is being exploited by enemies of humanity, by building on the potential of youth and empowering them to achieve their ambitions. That can be accomplished by equipping young people with quality education, proper job opportunities and a decent living.

We are in a race to invest in the hearts and minds as well as the capabilities of youth. The ideologies of darkness can reach where armies cannot, as modern communications have provided all voices with an opportunity to reach every ear willing to listen. Young people comprise the largest group of Internet users, and extremist groups spread their poisonous ideology across social media platforms — luring victims into their dark world under religious pretexts and promises of heavenly rewards. To that end, they use appealing high-tech videos that fascinate and mislead young people by glorifying the crimes of terrorist as great achievements. We have to stand up to that threat, which takes advantage of our youth's potential to create an inhumane world. We have to direct our energies away from answering the question "What should we do?" toward the question of "How should we do it?" We must empower young people to fight for their own future by giving them the tools to address their generation through electronic communication platforms. They need to form intellectual networks and alliances that can reach their peers and lead the youth to adopt the values of co-existence, respect for diversity and rejection of violence.

Allow me to declare the readiness of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to host the first international conference on the role of youth in building sustainable peace, in partnership with the United Nations, in August. The goal of the event is to enhance the capacity of young people to build peace, and confront extremism and terrorism. The youth of today need all of those gathered around this table, who are the policymakers who can impact world peace and security, the decision makers who can partner with young people in peacebuilding efforts. We must not allow them to become the targets of violence and destruction.

The generation represented here is also in charge of developing education, development and economic policies. We have before us the largest generation of young people in history, and the greatest opportunity to build and empower communities where reason is law and ethics are the constitution, where peace, equality, respect, dialogue, coexistence and acceptance of differences are all core values. Those are the foundations of our common humanity.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the members of the Council.

I give the floor to the Minister for Cities, Youth and Sports of France.

Mr. Kanner (France) (*spoke in French*): At a time when France has probably just managed to escape another deadly attack, this time targeting churches and Christianity, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Jordanian presidency of the Security Council for organizing this debate. I am convinced that the subject of youth should receive greater focus in our exchanges. I have no doubt that the Crown Prince of Jordan shares that belief, as he has just expressed.

France is an old country, but its population is young. We have the highest birthrate in Europe. Our demographic is our strength. It is also our responsibility. It is our responsibility to provide our young people with prospects, to give meaning to their life and, perhaps

even more importantly, to give meaning to life in general. The ideology that threatens the world today is a morbid one that seeks to repress our desires, condemn our joy, and extinguish our vital energy.

The international community was struck by the horror of the massacre in Garissa, in which 148 Kenyans were killed for their beliefs. And let us not forget the murder of Christians in the Middle East. Let us not forget the plight of the 276 Nigerian highschool girls kidnapped one year ago from Chibok by Boko Haram. Extremists hate the otherness of women. Let us not forget either the atrocities committed against children and youth by Daesh in Iraq and Syria, or the martyrdom of Syrian youth by the regime of Bashar Al-Assad.

Young people are on the side of life and, as such, should be the best shield against obscurantism. It is necessary to both work with young people and also to protect them from the machinations of the extremists. The latter are extremely active on social networks and disseminate conspiracy theories that undermine institutional authority. They feed on the helplessness of the young. Girls and boys as young as 13 or 14 years old have been recruited from a number of countries, including my own. In France, we speak of several hundred young people, perhaps more. That is very few, but far too many. Even just one would be one too many. Therefore, my mission is to show each young person in France that the Republic remains valid; it is still our future and our ideal. I must convince my young fellow citizens that is in the Republic, and therefore in liberty, equality and fraternity that they will find the best conditions for their fulfilment and happiness.

The Jordanian initiative is right to remind us that the struggle against extremism cannot be military alone. It is a wider political and moral struggle in which society as a whole has a role to play. That is why France, after the terrible attacks in January, which both injured and killed, has decided to launch a national campaign for republican values. It is in that spirit that the Prime Minister, Manuel Valls, just announced a major national plan to combat racism and anti-Semitism with a special emphasis on the youth.

Starting in school we wish, through specific teachings, to focus on the concepts of citizenship and secularism, the French model that strikes a balance between fundamental freedoms, which allowed for the peaceful exercise of freedom of all religions and the conditions that enable us to live together since its consecration 110 years ago this year. Secularism is not an opinion; it is the freedom to have one. It is essential that every child understands the foundations of our collective foundation, that which makes us a nation, and beyond that, which signals our belonging to the same human community. Young people must understand that this is not just a matter of fact, but one of determination and responsibility.

School is a central institution in France, but other actors are mobilized with the same objective. Associations that do the same job of providing citizenship education in neighbourhoods where despair is the greatest have seen a considerable increase in their numbers. The State and associations are bringing this republican discourse to the Internet. We are launching a counteroffensive campaign against the arguments of our opponents in order to prevent the most absurd and dangerous theories from spreading.

On a large scale, we are developing mechanisms for citizen engagement, such as civic service. For 6 to 12 months, young French people who are interested will be compensated for accomplishing a mission of general interest within an association or administration. As such, 150,000 young people in France will be involved by the end of 2016. We now wish to develop this mechanism at the international level. The best ambassadors of humanist values among young people, are the young people themselves. In that regard, I welcome the remarkable work of UNICEF and its national committees, in particular UNICEF France, which, through its Youth Ambassador Programmes, turns young people into veritable global citizens that carry a message of solidarity and humanity.

Finally, let us not abandon those who have gone astray or have made a mistake. Everyone is capable of realizing their mistakes and to make sincere amends. We would like to show radicalized youth who return from combat zones their terrible mistake and offer them the possibility of reinsertion into their home countries in accordance with the values of those countries. France is aware that its response cannot be confined within its own borders; we are acting in concert with our European partners. My country took the initiative by, for example, convening a meeting of the Ministers of Education of the 28 member States of the European Union in Paris on 10 March. Measures need to be adopted to improve coordination aimed at combating terrorist propaganda and recruitment over the Internet through collective pressure on providers, to harmonize legislation with respect to the removal of online illegal

material and to adapt the international legislative framework that governs the increasingly globalized flow of information.

Along with our fight to combat violent extremism, we want to bring to the United Nations the struggle to restore hope to our youth, as the Organization is the premiere venue of multilateralism. The anti-terrorist strategy defined by the United Nations remains more relevant than ever, and the World Programme of Action for Youth will doubtless take on new momentum. Next month will mark 20 years since that programme was established — a good age at which to become involved. It is crucial for that anniversary to be more than a mere formality. It should rather be seen as an opportunity for Member States to show youth around the world that we believe in them.

Ms. Power (United States of America): I thank His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein Bin Abdullah II for joining the Council to preside over today's meeting. His presence here is yet another testament to Jordan's deep commitment to combating violent extremism among youth and people of all ages.

On Monday, 20 April, six young Somali-American men, aged 19 to 21, were charged in Minneapolis with terrorism-related offenses. They had planned to travel to Syria to join the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Five of the six were United States citizens, and one was a permanent resident. The young men had reportedly been inspired in part by another young Somali-American, Abdi Noor, who left the same city in May 2014 shortly after his twentieth birthday and joined ISIL in Syria. They had also in part been encouraged by one another, in what is known as peer-to-peer recruitment, through regular meetings to plan their trip and discuss their violent ideology. Their case is just one of the many recent instances in which young people have attempted to join ISIL or other terrorist groups. In some instances, as with the Minneapolis arrests, we have succeeded in stopping youth before they could reach their destination. In other instances, we have not, as happened in February, when three British girls of ages 15 to 16 travelled to Turkey and likely onwards to ISIL-controlled territory, where they presumably remain.

ISIL is showing increased sophistication in recruiting young people, particularly in virtual spaces. The group disseminates some 90,000 tweets each day, Its members and supporters routinely co-opt trendy hashtags to disseminate their messages. ISIL even reportedly developed a Twitter app last year that allows Twitter subscribers to hand over control of their feed to ISIL, allowing ISIL to tweet from the individual subscriber's account, thereby exponentially amplifying the reach of its messages. In February, ISIL published a polished 50-page online guide called the *Hijrah to the Islamic State*, which instructs potential recruits on how to make the journey to its territory, including everything from finding safe houses in Turkey to what kind of backpack to bring and how to answer questions from immigration officials without arousing suspicion.

It is not just ISIL that is aggressively targeting children and youth, but Al-Qaida, Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab and other groups as well. There is a clear consensus that we — and by we, I mean, of course, not just the United States but all countries committed to combating terrorist groups — must make countering violent extremism a central part of our counter-terrorism efforts. That is particularly true among children and teens, whose youth makes them especially vulnerable to recruitment. Yet even with increased attention to the problem, the reality is that we are being outspent, outflanked and out-innovated by terrorist groups intent on recruiting new young members. We have to catch up, for their welfare and our collective security. That is one of the reasons why we look forward to the Secretary-General's plan of action to counter violent extremism, which will, we hope, galvanize the United Nations to take a leading role in empowering and uniting Member States to tackle this very grave problem.

That is also one of the main reasons that President Barack Obama convened a White House summit to counter violent extremism on 19 February. More than 60 Governments took part in the summit, including most of the members of the Council, together with civil-society representatives from over 50 countries and private-sector leaders. As many members know, we look forward to a leaders' summit on the margins of the General Assembly in September to evaluate the progress that has been made and the challenges that most definitely remain to implement the White House agenda to combat violent extremism.

One of the participants in the White House summit was a young Moroccan woman, Zineb Benalla. Zineb works for the Arab Center for Scientific Research and Humane Studies, a non-governmental organization that, with support from the United States Agency for International Development, has helped lead an innovative effort to counter violent extremism in

northern Mali. As Council members know, terrorist groups seized large swaths of the region in 2012 and continue to carry out attacks and recruit young people. Zineb's project was focused on reaching vulnerable youth studying in the region's madrassas. Research showed that madrassa instructors were teaching only religious texts and focusing mainly on rote memorization. Zineb's programme aimed at broadening the curriculum to foster more critical thinking and reasoning skills, which help young people question, and ultimately reject, the narrow ideologies of terrorist groups. Zineb did not go directly to the schools, knowing that she would be turned away. Instead, she met repeatedly with imams and elders in Timbuktu and Gao, gradually earning their trust over cups of tea. When she eventually laid out the proposal to start book clubs in the madrassas, they accepted. With the backing of those imams and elders, students and teachers were given e-readers and allowed to download books that would previously have been considered haram, or sinful, such as works of philosophy and novels. She then organized workshops where she trained dozens of educators in how to teach the new material. While that is a narrow programme designed for a specific set of circumstances, Zineb's story nevertheless illustrates several key lessons about how to build efforts to counter violent extremism among young people.

First, education is of course essential to developing the critical thinking skills that can empower youth to challenge violent extremist ideologies. We have seen similar efforts undertaken on a broader scale by the Government of Morocco and others. Morocco is working to replace teachers and imams who promote violent extremist ideologies with ones who uphold the values of respect and dignity and who preach more moderate interpretations of Islam.

Secondly, the trust and support of local actors is critically important. That includes not only Government officials but religious and civil-society leaders and even families. As the first and most important line of defence in protecting youth, communities need the tools to do their part. The Safe Spaces Initiative, a guide created by the Muslim Public Affairs Council to help communities implement a multi-tiered strategy of prevention, intervention and the ejection of violent extremist elements, is just one example of a resource that informs communities about how to be more active partners.

Thirdly, as others here have stressed today, we need to enlist youth themselves in leading this effort. Research shows that young people are more likely to listen to, and be influenced by, their peers. Yet too often we approach youth as the passive recipients of campaigns to counter violent extremism, rather than as active participants in shaping their strategy and spearheading their implementation.

We have seen how powerful youth-led initiatives can be, including those that use satire. That was the approach Karim Farok adopted. An amateur Egyptian musician, Karim took an ISIL chant and remixed it into a pop song, posting his version on social media sites. While his action may at first glance look like a way of amplifying ISIL's message, in reality Karim's remix was a form of protest because ISIL's fundamentalist interpretation of Islam forbids music with instruments. By transgressing the groups rules, Karim's song encouraged others to express criticism as well, rather than be silenced by fear. Not only did his remix go viral, garnering hundreds of thousands of views, but it also spawned countless other musical and dancing spoofs of ISIL chants, a potent form of counter-extremist messaging that kids can relate to.

Of course, we must pursue other lines of effort in countering violent extremism in youth as well, such as strengthening laws and international coordination to stop the flow of young foreign terrorist fighters to battlefields, as we committed to do under resolution 2178 (2014), and enlisting the private sector in amplifying our message, as Google Ideas has done through the launch of its Against Violent Extremism Network, which has given a platform to more than 500 rehabilitated former extremists. We need to do more on all of these fronts.

At the beginning, I spoke about the six young men from Minneapolis who were detained earlier this week. One of the main reasons that they were stopped from joining ISIL was that a young man who had originally planned to join with them experienced a change in conscience. He took a step back; he saw the group's violent intentions for what they were and he decided to report the group to law enforcement. Without his action, those young men may well have made it to ISIL-controlled territory, where they could have taken part in the group's horrific atrocities. That young man's choice shows how a single changed mind — just one person who starts to think differently and more compassionately — can disrupt and ultimately stop a

dangerous action by many people. That is a valuable lesson in countering violent extremism and, ultimately, it is what our efforts are all about.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I give the floor to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Spain.

Mr. Ybáñez (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by thanking His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein Bin Abdullah II of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, for convening this debate. Our Minister wanted to be here, but unfortunately the difficult situation in the Mediterranean has prevented him from coming. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his presence and briefing and the key note speakers for their interesting statements.

The Security Council needs to play an important role in the face of the episodes of radicalization that are taking place in many places around the world. Extremist and violent ideologies have penetrated many levels of our society. The world is witnessing the unprecedented growth of this threat. Terrorist groups established on the basis of extremist and dehumanizing terrorist ideologies, such as Daesh, Al-Qaida and Boko Haram, have demonstrated a great recruitment capacity, including among young people.

When we analyse the role of young people in the radicalization process, we tend to refer to them either as a problem — they are perpetrators and terrorists — or as an intrinsically vulnerable group — they are victims, without addressing the participation of youth in peacebuilding. Young people are not a homogenous group with an intrinsic vulnerability and they do not usually begin armed conflicts. This problem concerns all of us in the Chamber equally.

In Europe, we have been struck by the fact that, of the 20,000 foreigners who are part of Daesh, at least one-fifth are from Europe. The vulnerability of certain social groups, their socioeconomic situations, their level of education or their condition as minorities in which they feel marginalized are factors that can have an impact on feelings of alienation and exclusion, turning these groups into fertile grounds for the emergence of hatred, resentment and radicalism. The high rates of unemployment, in particular among young people, no doubt contribute to this phenomenon.

In other parts of the world, this hatred and resentment have different origins. That is the case in conflict zones. We often see the international community withdraw from conflicts too early when there is believed to be a sufficient level of economic and social functionality. The international community therefore often withdraws without addressing and solving the post-conflict trauma experienced by part of the local populations. Sometimes these populations try to seek revenge while other populations, owing to the lack of means to support themselves, are led to use violence again. We are focusing on responding to the emergency without dealing with the deep-rooted causes and consequences of the conflict. There is no doubt that the time has come to focus more attention on the medium to long-range dimension of conflict management.

The complexity of the radicalization processes described requires a multifaceted approach. Youth and education are two closely linked areas for intervention. Approximately 1.8 billion young people around the world should and can play an important role in our societies. We need to underscore their added value and promote the complete social integration of those with immigrant backgrounds.

Unfortunately, the facts have demonstrated that education is indeed a necessary but not always sufficient condition to prevent adherence to extremist and violent ideologies. That is why I want to underscore the importance of intercultural and interreligious education. We need to promote an education based on universal values and respect for diversity and human rights. Sports can also be a very useful tool for peace and development. Athletic activities among young people from different countries, cultures or beliefs and the participation of the most well-known athletes and sports teams in campaigns aimed at young people to promote tolerance can be very effective tools. There are many examples of athletes who cooperate with the United Nations in awareness-raising campaigns. That is the case of basketball player Pau Gasol, who is a goodwill ambassador of UNICEF in Spain.

We need to ensure that increasingly more young people are leaders in their communities in peacebuilding, reconciliation and post-conflict rebuilding. It would be useful to have training projects in this area. The agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission, which is being reviewed this year, should include strategies that prevent radicalization.

The media play an important role in awareness-raising in society and among young people in particular. We need to foster a partnership with as many media outlets as possible in combating violent extremism.

Media literacy for young people will form critical and peaceful perspectives.

Authorities and religious leaders play an important role in preventing radicalization. Schools of religion have a great deal of authority and capacity to influence their students' concept of life. As representatives of Governments, we have a responsibility to ensure that all religious schools teach tolerance and respect for others and to take the legal and judicial measures that are necessary against those who do not comply with them. There should be a network of pro-peace religious leaders in the areas of conflict where it is most urgent to take action. The King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, whose Board of Directors is made up of religious leaders, is working in this direction.

I would also like to underscore the work carried out by the Egyptian university Al-Azhar, which has established an observatory to analyse all the fatwas that have been issued over the past year. That centre found that 200 fatwas could incite young people to join terrorist groups. To counter that, it has launched a campaign in the media and on the Internet in which it explains that Daesh is a terrorist organization. We need more actions of this kind.

Women in general and young people in particular can also play a crucial role through their participation in any strategy against violent extremism and in peace processes. The empowerment of women diminishes the probability that violent extremism will expand.

The main source for the recruitment of young people by radical groups takes place through the Internet. We have many examples of good practices to counter their propaganda, examples of messages of tolerance and understanding towards other cultures. For example, I could mention the video disseminated by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya through Twitter prior to the recent round of negotiations among Libyans in Skhirat. We need to strengthen international police, judiciary and legislative cooperation so as to ensure that terrorists do not use modern media for their purposes without consequence.

I also want to emphasize the importance of civil society and, in particular, the role that victims of terrorism can play as a moral reference for young people. The 2014 revised United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy Review refers to this.

In my view, it is essential to share good national practices. We support the process established by the United States in this regard at the recent Washington, D.C., Summit Against Violent Extremism. In February, Spain approved a national strategic plan to counter violent radicalization, which recognizes the vulnerability of young people to radical discourse. We also have a resource centre for cultural diversity in education and a fund to support the reception and integration of immigrants, most of whom are young people.

The time has come to move to a new phase in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism. A month ago, Spain requested that the Secretary-General consider appointing, within the Secretariat and with existing resources, a special representative mandated to combat violent extremism. Such a representative, in addition to promoting the coordination of policies against violent extremism, should make it a priority to prevent the radicalization of young people and work, together with the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, to integrate young people in the development of relevant policies. Such a special representative would coordinate her actions with all bodies, funds and programmes of the United Nations whose work touches on this agenda. The Alliance of Civilizations should undoubtedly be at the centre of this process. Likewise, regional organizations should be involved, as should the Union for the Mediterranean, which already works in this area.

Your Royal Highness, I thank you for having convened this debate. The commitment of the international community and the Security Council to the fight against violent extremism, especially as it affects young people, will be key to safeguarding humankind's greatest treasure: our diversity.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the Secretary of State for External Relations of Angola.

Mr. Augusto (Angola): Allow me, on behalf of the Republic of Angola, to extend a warm welcome to your Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II and to express our appreciation to the delegation of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for organizing this very important debate. We would also like to reiterate our support and appreciation to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his tireless efforts to promote peace and justice throughout the world. We welcome and thank

Mr. Peter Neumann, Director of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence at King's College, and Mr. Scott Atran, Director of Research in Anthropology at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, for their briefings.

Over the past few years, we have witnessed an alarming increase in the number of young men and women, many of them well-bred and -educated, joining forces with terrorist armed groups, contrary to the traditional stereotype idea of terrorism as a product of disadvantaged, marginalized people. This phenomenon, along with the increasing influence of such terrorist networks around the world, should serve as a warning to the international community that the root causes of this issue must be identified and dealt with effectively. Today's debate is therefore very timely.

Although the reasons driving young people to become radicalized vary, we believe that there are some common traits.

First, identity crisis, exclusion, misinformation and a discrepancy between expectations and reality are factors that young people can experience, irrespective of geographic location or social condition. During this stage of life, young men and women are rebellious, tend to vent their frustration at the community and are vulnerable to violent extremist propaganda, in virtual networks, youth clubs or places of worship. It is therefore important that local communities engage with young people and provide positive outlets for expression, through sports, the arts or any other programmes that provide a safe and nurturing environment.

Secondly, the evolution of technology and the rapid spread of information through such means of communication have provided greater awareness among young people of political events around the world. In addition, political and military interventionism, often sustained by double-standard approaches, breeds resentment that leads to various forms of violent extremism.

These realities make it absolutely imperative to find ways to deal with such critical issues, address the spiritual and material fundamental needs of young people and promote their political, economic and social inclusion, in a manner whereby no one is left behind in enjoying the common good and the outstanding achievements of our contemporary world.

On the other hand, the world's political and strategic outlook must change so that, at the international level, peoples and countries are treated equally, and policies contributing to exacerbating tensions and humiliating peoples are definitively set aside.

In Angola, around 60 per cent of the population is young, and as in many African countries they are faced with various obstacles and challenges in their self-realization. We have many young people who either actively participated or were indirectly affected by the long and bitter civil strife. They are the object of concern to the Angolan Government, which has established as a central objective of its economic policies the generation of qualified, competitive and adequately remunerated employment for young people. Angola's 2013-2017 national development plan gives a central role to youth, who are considered promoters of modernization and major agents of change. As such, the plan aims not only to improve the living conditions, but also to strengthen capacity building for Angola's youth.

An equally important aspect consists in promoting effective participation by young people in the democratic process for social change and the development of the country. Such participation is based on the promotion of youth and student associations, and the strengthening of social, community-based projects directed at young people.

Recently, due to the increasing threat of international terrorist groups and the more sophisticated recruiting methods used by them to attract disenchanted youth to their evil causes, the Angolan Government created the National Counter-Terrorism Observatory, comprising a multisectoral technical group, joining the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, the Interior, and Defence, and the State security services, in the main objective of monitoring and combating any potential threats.

Angola, which has enjoyed steady economic growth in recent years, is an attractive destination for many illegal immigrants. That is of great concern to our authorities, and is seen as a real threat to the country's security and stability.

In February 2015, our Government invited experts from 11 countries in Central Africa for a seminar to debate issues related to terrorism around the world and to seek proposals for a common strategy to combat the threat in the region. Promoted by the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights and the Ministry of the Interior, in partnership with the United Nations, issues related to terrorism and human rights were discussed during the seminar, including, inter alia, violent extremism,

terrorism and the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters in the Central African region; the question of development and social inclusion in the fight against terrorism; measures to guarantee respect for human rights and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism; and strengthening the international legal architecture to promote respect for human rights and an effective justice system.

Mr. Judeh took the Chair.

We stress once again the importance of today's debate and of the effective implementation of national and international policies to tackle this problem at its roots. Young people are increasingly interconnected, and we must promote the means for bringing them even closer together. However, young frustrated men and women without a purpose in life and deceived by the promise of fighting for a just cause are extremely vulnerable to recruitment by these increasingly sophisticated terrorist networks. We must, at all levels of society — at home, at school, in grass roots organizations, at places of worship, in academia, at social networks at the local, national, regional and international level — conduct an energetic and creative ideological struggle against terrorism. It is high time that, going beyond military means, we engage not only with Governments and international organizations but also with large movements and grass-roots groups to foster a dialogue and a mutual understanding to promote democratic principles and defeat radicalism and extremist violence.

Some concrete steps that could facilitate this process are, in our view, strengthening the role of local Governments in addressing community problems, in coordination with local authorities and civil society; developing projects that seek to reduce inequality and promote the active participation of youth in social projects for peacebuilding; creating opportunities for young people's sustained and institutionalized participation, ownership and leadership in local, national, regional and international decision-making processes; supporting innovative ideas of youth-led organizations and young people who are influential among their peers to improve the daily security situation and safety within communities; ensuring access to quality education, health-care services and justice and judicial systems and supporting youth-oriented organizations; and fostering increased information-sharing and transparency with national and international networks that seek to combat violent extremism.

In conclusion, we would like to reiterate that we strongly believe that the youth of the world can be agents of development for social inclusion, tolerance and peace. We will therefore continue to work to implement all the programmes and initiatives that we have delineated and work with our partners in the international community to stop the violent extremism that is spreading so dangerously throughout the world.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Malaysia.

Mr. Zainuddin (Malaysia): At the outset, I would like to express my delegation's great appreciation for the unique opportunity afforded by the participation of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II as he shared his perspective on the important and timely topic of today's open debate. We also wish to thank Mr. Peter Neumann and Mr. Scott Atran for their comprehensive and illuminating briefings.

The international community is witnessing an increasingly dramatic trend towards radicalization and violent extremism among youth, perpetrated by terrorist groups that are manipulating grievances and religion to achieve their political aims. Unfortunately, these groups' calls for violent extremism have attracted supporters and sympathizers worldwide, in developing and developed countries alike, particularly among the young. The youth are our future, and we therefore cannot afford to stand aside and watch as they are increasingly affected by extremism and violence, whether as victims or as perpetrators.

Based on various studies conducted in Malaysia and other parts of the South-East Asian region on the factors that contribute to radicalizing youth, socioeconomic aspects such as poverty, deprivation, unemployment and a lack of education are not the only factors contributing to the rise of extremism among youth. This is evident from the fact that large numbers of the militants in the South-East Asian region who have joined such terrorist groups in the Middle East as Al-Qaida and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant are professionals and from the middle class, including academicians, engineers and students.

The main motivation seems to be political in nature, be it a reaction to prolonged or grievous injustice,

gross violations of human rights, foreign occupation or systematic discrimination. Their despair and anger are effectively exploited by terrorist groups, which instil a sense of purpose and identity in impressionable young people. While these youth may not suffer personal trauma and sufferings from grievous injustice or violation of human rights first hand, they strongly identify with others who do, especially those sharing the same religion, ethnicity or ideology. This is the so-called secondary trauma symptom.

In that context, religion or ideology becomes a convenient tool to justify and legitimize violent actions. Meanwhile, the advent of information and communication technology and the Internet brings sufferings from far-flung regions of the world to youth as never before, and makes it easier for the extremists to reach out globally to promote their cause, gain sympathizers and spread terror.

We must acknowledge that terrorists groups and extremists wield not only hard power — that is, the ability to use force to pursue their agendas — but also considerable soft power in terms of ideology or narrative that is attractive to impressionable youth. In addressing youth radicalization, the international community has developed comprehensive counter-terrorism strategies that largely focus on the military, strategic and financial aspects of countering terrorism. However, unless we address the appeal of extremists' soft power, we will not be able to effectively stem the tide of youth radicalization in the long run.

Malaysia strongly believes that the international community needs to develop a comprehensive counter-narrative that would address extremist ideologies, counter violent propaganda and win the hearts and minds of the people. The counter-narrative must be able to set forth a substantive, convincing and feasible concept that could be used by youth when they are confronted with the perception of injustice, discrimination and suffering in the world today.

We have to create awareness among youth that violence is not the answer in addressing injustice and sufferings and is contrary to the basic tenet of every religion. Instead of resorting to aggression, the counter-narrative should focus on non-violent yet powerful means to effect change, such as peaceful protest, persuasion, diplomatic and political pressure, boycotts and sanctions.

As part of Malaysia's efforts to provide a counter-narrative for challenging the soft power of extremists, five years ago, here at the United Nations, the Malaysian Prime Minister initiated the Global Movement of Moderates. The idea was to provide a platform for the silent majority to counter extremism in all its forms. Central to the initiative is the value of moderation as an approach and a guide for action that strongly emphasizes tolerance, understanding, dialogue, mutual respect and inclusiveness. With those key values and objectives, moderation is undoubtedly an important tool and approach to bridging differences and resolving disputes.

We also believe in rehabilitation, and not just punitive action, in dealing with youths who, whether due to their sense of adventure, idealism or frustration, have fallen for the narrative of extremists. For instance, as part of the efforts to win the hearts and minds of misled youth, the Royal Malaysian Police plays a critical role in engaging with detained terrorists, with the aim of rehabilitating and returning them as useful members of society.

Malaysia has also implemented enabling policies, including the National Youth Development Policy, since young people are assets that should be nurtured and empowered to realize their full potential and contribute to nation-building. Through the Policy, our country aims to produce a holistic and harmonious Malaysia youth force imbued with strong spiritual and moral values. It is our hope that the Policy will mould a generation of youth who are educated, progressive and competitive, as well as tolerant and with a deep sense of responsibility, drive and vision.

In that regard, there is an urgent need to conduct research into the drivers and the trigger factors that lead young people to extremism and terrorism. Unless solid baseline data is obtained, there is a danger that we will craft policy based on anecdotal evidence that will subsequently be the basis of designing and implementing intervention programmes that do not address the root problems. Therefore, Malaysia has conducted qualitative studies in the region with regard to reaching out to youth and countering the terrorists' narrative, which we have published and disseminated.

We are also in the process of looking into undergraduate radicalization in our region, with the aim of understanding the pathway that university undergraduates take before they are indoctrinated and

radicalized. On another level, realizing the tremendous potential and creative energy of youth, we are also designing a peer-to-peer module that will be used by young people to reach out to other young people. The purpose of the module will be to encourage young people to critically analyse the rhetoric and propaganda spread by the extremists and terrorists. Subsequently, that would serve to build a mental fire wall that negates and nullifies the claim that indiscriminate violence practiced by terrorists is an effective method of resolving conflict.

Last but not least, in order for the counter-narrative to work, it has to be based on facts on the ground. Therefore, in the long run, the international community must strive to remove the grievances and injustice that constitute great motivations for young people to become radicalized. We should also focus on building sustainable and inclusive economies that provide opportunities for young people. We must give them hope for their futures. We need to promote the right path in a relentless manner. Youth must understand that violence and brutality committed in the name of religion are abhorrent and unacceptable in any civilized society.

While addressing such grievances might not resolve the problem of extremism overnight, it will go a long way in removing the motive manipulated by the terrorists to gain sympathy among impressionable youths and to recruit foreign terrorist fighters worldwide. Let us all not forget that, while young people make up approximately 25 per cent of the world's population, they make up 100 per cent of our future.

Mrs. Ogwu (Nigeria): Nigeria welcomes Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II to New York. We also thank the delegation of Jordan for organizing this important and timely debate. We want to acknowledge the presence of participating Ministers and to welcome them to the Security Council. Our appreciation also goes to the Secretary-General, Mr. Neumann and Mr. Atran for their insightful briefings.

Violent extremism is one of the greatest threats to international peace and security; combating it is one of the most urgent challenges facing the international community. The most violent extremist groups operating across the world today — the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham, Al-Qaida, Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab — dominate the headlines with atrocities that shock our conscience as the human race. They share a common agenda to unleash terror, mayhem, destruction, instability and human suffering and to acquire territory. In pursuit of their hideous agenda, they radicalize and recruit young people. The inevitable consequence is an increase in the number of young people who become foreign terrorist fighters. That is evidently a cause-and-effect relationship. It is therefore crucial that any attempt to address the problem of violent extremism needs to begin with an in-depth assessment of the options available to prevent the radicalization of young people and their recruitment by extremist groups.

In his profound briefing this morning, Mr. Neumann reminded us that there is no single reason that young people become radicalized. Indeed, various reasons have been adduced to explain why young people are readily enlisted into extremist groups. Some of those reasons include the quest for recognition, fellowship and identity. Young people also join extremist groups in search of financial gain, protection and solidarity. Those are some of the pull factors that lure young people into extremist groups.

The other dimension of the problem is the push factors linked to the circumstances of young people in many parts of the world. The disproportionate impact of the economic crisis in some countries tends to marginalize and disempower youth. That could in turn propel them into violent extremism. Poverty and unemployment could also trigger youth vulnerability to violent extremism. Those and other push factors often reflect the dynamics in society.

Ideologically motivated violence begins at the local and moves on to the national level, eventually taking on an international dimension. Addressing the problem will therefore require concerted action at the local level. That is why the family, community leaders, teachers and religious leaders — and Mr. Neumann this morning added the mother — all have a crucial role to play. Working together in a complementary manner, they can all help to build safe, secure and resilient societies where young people are shielded from values that are alien to their societies. It is essential that all stakeholders play their roles in the character formation of youth by building linkages across sectors, sharing experiences and adhering to best practices.

In Nigeria, youth matters are embedded in decision-making at all levels of Government, including at the federal, state and local levels. The vision of our national policy on youth is to empower Nigerian youth to become self-reliant and responsible citizens. The policy

aims to provide a sustainable framework for integrated planning and collaboration among stakeholders for the development of policies, programmes and other initiatives that promote and enhance the development of Nigerian youth. For example, the National Youth Service Corps, a scheme established in 1973, has been a vital instrument in inculcating in Nigerian youth the spirit of selfless service to the community. It has also helped to foster much-needed unity and understanding among young Nigerians by exposing them to the diverse cultures in a pluralistic society.

We also have a citizenship and leadership training centre that has been established to give young people the experience of self-discovery and self-actualization. Our Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria programme, otherwise known YouWiN!, is a recent Government initiative designed to generate jobs. It aims to encourage and support aspiring entrepreneurial young people in Nigeria in developing and executing business ideas that could generate employment opportunities. It is expected that this and similar Government initiatives will help empower young people and make them productive members of society.

Given its experience with Boko Haram, Nigeria understands that countering radicalization and violent extremism will require more than a military approach or option. For that reason, the Federal Government has adopted and institutionalized a soft approach that encompasses peace, security and development. It involves a multi-stakeholder approach that has brought together all levels of Government, the private sector, academics, civil society and community and religious leaders in a joint effort to stem the tide of radicalization that has helped to foil the infamous Boko Haram insurgency.

The emphasis of the soft approach is on counterradicalization, deradicalization, strategic communication and economic regeneration. Counterradicalization aims to stem the flow of recruits and reduce the potential for indoctrination. De-radicalization seeks to reintegrate extremists and their families back into society through a number of activities, including prison interventions and vocational training. Strategic communication aims to produce a narrative that presents moderate religious views in order to counter the terrorists' extremist narrative. Economic regeneration is being pursued in the states most affected by Boko Haram's activities, with the aim of improving the local economy in those areas and raising living standards.

The problem of the radicalization of young people and violent extremism is one that requires concerted action at every level and the national, regional and global levels in particular. Because it is a critical threat to global peace, terrorism is a multifaceted battle that must be fought on many fronts, with a determined will to transform young people all over the world to enable them to take on their role as trustees of the world's future.

Mr. Ramírez Carreño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would first like to thank the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for convening this important open debate, and we salute and welcome Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II. We thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Peter Neumann and Mr. Scott Atran for their briefings. We are also very grateful for the excellent concept paper prepared by the Jordanian delegation to guide us in today's debate (S/2015/231).

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has given special attention to this issue in the context of the fight against the violence and terrorism that are plaguing the Middle East and major regions of Africa. We categorically reject and condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. That is why we believe it cannot be encouraged or aided financially or militarily with the aim of destabilizing or overthrowing a Government. There is no good or bad terrorism; its culture is always one of death.

Young people constitute the most mobile sector of society. They have always been politically mobile and a barometer for the political ideas that change history. If today we are acknowledging that young people in significant parts of the world are mobilizing in support of fascism, intolerance, racism and extremism, we must also acknowledge that the problem is rooted in society as a whole. These young people are the victims of a sick system or society. Thus if we are to address the root causes of young people's attraction to extremism and their active involvement in terrorism, we must make a comprehensive, critical assessment of the crisis embodied in a way of life that is marked by violence, exclusion, poverty and a profound spiritual void in the face of the triumph of the material world.

According to the United Nations Population Fund's *State of World Population 2014* report, today there are more young people — about 1.8 billion of them aged

between 10 and 24 years old — than there have ever been. Young people constitute about a quarter of the world's population. The report also states that about 500 million of those aged between 15 and 24 live on less than $2 a day, and more than 74 million of them are unemployed.

Since poverty and exclusion among young people are a global phenomenon and a challenge that every nation must deal with, we wonder why the phenomenon of terrorism is worse in particular regions such as the Middle East and Africa. On the strange and incomprehensible world chessboard that is the scene of the great Powers' struggle for their interests, vast areas of conflict have been created, sometimes bloody and tragic, as in the Middle East and North Africa, and at others chronic and permanent, as in central Africa. In those areas of conflict, the great Powers, with their immense military, economic and propagandistic communications resources, have focused their extraordinary power on promoting war, violence, sectarianism, hatred, religious intolerance and extremism.

The experts on social behaviour undoubtedly bring many more elements to bear in the study and understanding of how such factors influence young people. But what is clear is that from their earliest years of life, when a person's world view and spirituality are formed, the children who have grown up in and been exposed to the brutality of war in Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen and Palestine are now the most likely to be those young people who are flocking to join extremist and terrorist groups in large numbers. It is highly probable that the children in some regions of Africa who have lived in a permanent atmosphere of social violence, exclusion and severe poverty have become the young people who, sadly, are joining terrorist groups today. The hopelessness and lack of opportunity felt by the millions of young people living amid war, sectarianism, colonialism or foreign occupation create the conditions that enable extremism to appear, grow and develop. The emergence of extremist and terrorist groups has changed the face of societies that previously were tolerant and amicable towards their ethnic and religious minorities.

We should be asking ourselves in this debate how it is possible that terrorist groups such as the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, Al-Qaida and the Al-Nusra Front have the capacity to act that they do. So much military capability. So many weapons. Such mobility. Such communications capability. Who is funding them? Who is arming them? Who is encouraging them? If we want to protect young people from involvement in extremism and terrorism, there can be no double standards on this issue. All support to terrorist groups, direct or indirect, must end. The flow of weapons must be stopped.

Another aspect, no less important in addressing the problem, relates to the institutional capacity of States to prevent the propagation of extremism and of terrorism among young people, especially in post-conflict situations. The various State institutions need to coordinate their work of incorporating young people and introducing them to the possibilities of political, economic and social participation. Inclusive processes, literacy, education, work and attention to their spiritual and social needs are fundamental in combating hopelessness and emotional distress among young people. Nation States and the United Nations could coordinate across agencies, such as the UNESCO and the United Nations Development Programme, the promotion of zones of peace, tolerance, culture and socioeconomic development with the active participation of youth in the social fabric. That task is much more urgent and important in those countries that have developed or are exposed to armed conflict. In war-torn areas where children and youths are exposed to the trauma of violence and sectarianism, the absence or weakness of State institutions in the countries leaves room for extremism and terrorist groups.

Mrs. Kawar took the Chair.

Venezuela, like other countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, is a zone of peace. The Bolivarian Revolution led by President Hugo Chávez began, and President Nicolás Maduro Moros has continued to develop, a vast programme of inclusion of all sectors of society, with particular emphasis on youth. A massive literacy campaign in our country, which has allowed UNESCO to declare Venezuela a territory free of illiteracy, has developed missions of basic education that include more than 850,000 young people who had been outside the formal education system, and in municipalities, more than 2.5 million young people have had access to universities or higher education. Furthermore, we have established the Ministry of Popular Power for Youth, which directly serves the needs and addresses the problems of that sector of the country, and we have enacted laws specifically designed to ensure youth employment. The inclusion

of young people as actors in society — their active participation, their protection as a vulnerable sector and their sociopolitical empowerment — are fundamental elements to successfully develop in society a culture of peace and tolerance that will triumph over a culture of violence and death.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): I would like to thank His Royal Highness the Crown Prince of Jordan for convening this important debate. Countering violent extremism is one of the most pressing international challenges that we face. It is a priority for my Prime Minister and for my Foreign Secretary, and we greatly appreciate the leadership shown by Jordan on this issue.

The past 12 months have been horrifying for young people across the world — hundreds of students brutally murdered in Kenya and Pakistan, scores of children abducted and enslaved by Boko Haram, and countless young people manipulated and exploited by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Al-Qaida, including some from my own country, tempted to join ISIL's murderous causes in Syria. The blame for these atrocities and many more lies in the generational scourge of violent extremism. We all have a role to play to defeat it, but we must particularly harness young people to aid us in the fight if we are to reach a long-term solution. They are the victims, but they are also the solution, as His Royal Highness pointed out. I will cover three areas where I think that together we can make a difference.

First, we must resolutely counter the narrative of extremism. It is incumbent upon all political, and particularly religious, leaders to speak out clearly with the message "not in my religion's name". But as others have pointed out, a counter-narrative is not enough. We need to promote a positive alternative narrative of tolerance and inclusion. We must support those brave youth advocates who stand up to extremism and promote this alternative narrative. We all recall the bravery and leadership shown by the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize winner, Malala Yusafzai. Her speech at the General Assembly calling for global education, even for those who sought to kill her, was a powerful message against extremism. Her story gives hope and inspiration to young people everywhere.

Supporting youth advocates goes beyond just giving them a platform; it is also about supporting countries to provide education for all so that others have a chance to follow Malala's lead. The United Kingdom is proud to have supported more than 4.5 million children in primary school education, mainly in South Asia and Africa. As Malala herself said, extremists attack schools because they are afraid of the change and equality we will bring to our society. It is partly through education that we can help expose the lies of Al-Qaida, ISIL, Boko Haram and others. It can help us to see how they hijack religion for their own violent aims. It is partly through education that we can give opportunity to vulnerable young people still searching for their place in the world. But education is not the whole answer. As we have heard, the link between educational attainment and extremism is not at all straightforward. In the United Kingdom, many academically gifted young people have also been radicalized.

Secondly, we must look at the factors that push youths to extremism in our own communities. We must protect young people in our schools, universities and prisons from the influence of extremism. The United Kingdom has trained over 130,000 public-sector workers with that objective. We have a team of regional coordinators that help universities manage the risk of extremism. Our schools have clear safeguards to prevent the promotion of extremist views incompatible with our values. Our prisons protect vulnerable young inmates during and after their sentences to prevent radicalization.

This is not about curbing free speech. Extremist ideas can be defeated only when people are free to challenge them. But we must recognize that not just violent extremism but non-violent extremism, whether Islamist or neo-Nazi, can also incite hate and breed violence. The Internet of course plays a crucial role in that. ISIL and others have hijacked social media to propagate abhorrent propaganda. Since 2010, the United Kingdom has had to remove 75,000 pieces of content encouraging or glorifying violent extremism. But civil society and industry can play a role, too. They must take a zero-tolerance approach to the abuse of their platforms by extremism. The Internet can be a powerful means of standing up to extremism; we must not let extremists use it unchallenged. Be it the Government, civil society or industry, we must ensure that young people are at the front and centre of our approach, so as to present a credible, hopeful alternative to the hate speech of extremism — the dream that Mr. Atran spoke of earlier today.

Thirdly, another strand for making a difference, lies with the Council. Over the past six months, we have

adopted resolutions that target the financing of ISIL and resolutions that oblige States to curb travel by foreign terrorist fighters. Through the Jordanian presidency, we have held important gatherings of religious leaders, Foreign Ministers and experts to discuss practical steps to address the challenge. But we can and we need to do more. As Mr. Neumann said, we still have much to learn about the root causes of extremism. Fragile and conflict-affected States can provide the conditions for violent extremism to take hold. Conflicted identity and economic and social marginalization can also play a part. Effective United Nations peacebuilding can therefore play an important role. By promoting inclusive political and economic institutions and encouraging democratic processes, we can help present young people with an alternative to turning to extremism. And in doing so, we have the chance to make the Security Council relevant to a new generation. Whenever the Council fails to act on an issue of global concern, we undermine the faith of young people in our work, and whenever we allow narrow national interests to hold international priorities to ransom, we erode confidence in the Council and our Governments. In this generational challenge against extremism, we simply cannot afford that.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to the Jordanian delegation for its initiative to hold this meeting on such an important topic.

Although people of any age are subject to radicalization, young people, with their unformed outlook and search for identity, are the most vulnerable to the ideas of violent extremism. Terrorists are actively involving minors in their heinous crimes. On the one hand, the joint task of the State is to prevent the influence of terrorists and radicals over young people by suppressing extremist propaganda and strengthening the resilience of young people to it. On the other hand, it is necessary to use the potential of young people, their activity, mobility and ability to navigate the information space with ease so as to create an atmosphere of social intolerance of violence and rejection of the ideas of extremism and terrorism.

The issue of young people cannot be considered in isolation from the overall context of the fight against the challenges of extremism and terrorism in the modern world. We see the basis for the work in this area in an equal and fair partnership of all countries under United Nations auspices. Its centre must lie in the comprehensive implementation of the resolutions of the Security Council and in the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, in particular its first area focus on providing conditions conducive to eradicating the spread of terrorism. We must reject any attempt to use violent extremism as an instrument of geopolitics and the redistribution of spheres of influence.

Connivance with the activities of extremist groups has already allowed them to threaten the future of entire nations, whose societies have been plunged into a morass of social, economic and political chaos. That is particularly clear in the examples of Iraq, Syria and Libya and the threat posed to other States in the region. Particular attention should be paid to the use of technology by extremists, including young people indoctrinated in extremism, to achieve domestic goals. We recently saw how insurgents were used in Central Europe as a spearhead to overthrow a democratically elected Government, when Molotov cocktails and snipers' bullets became the main vehicles of debate.

We must be more dynamic in using modern information and communications technologies to combat extremism. It is well known that young people fall easy prey to radical extremist content flooding popular social networks. Pursuant to resolution 1624 (2005), which is marking its tenth anniversary this year, States should prohibit by law any incitement to commit terrorist acts. Extremists' calls for violent actions on the Internet should be blocked by the competent Government departments, and their websites shut down.

The Internet, like traditional media, should be used to promote a positive agenda as a powerful alternative to radicalization. It is important to actively disseminate among young people and with their participation the ideas of mutual respect and intercultural and interreligious dialogue, taking local traditions and specificities into account. Educational institutions and civil society structures could make a significant contribution to combating radicalization and extremism. An important role in the prevention of radicalization can be played by local religious communities. Their role is primarily to explain that there is no link between radicalism and authentic religious precepts, to raise awareness of the relevant risks, and to take other preventive steps to prevent young people from engaging in terrorist and other extremist activities. A set of agreed recommendations on this subject is contained in resolution 2178 (2014). Other proven, effective tools are creative activities and sports, which give young people

the opportunity to participate in socially meaningful activities, help them to improve their own skills and talents, increase their self-confidence and self-esteem, and accustom them to peaceful coexistence.

Russia has consistently taken steps to effectively protect the State and its citizens against extremism and terrorism. In November 2014, we adopted a strategy for combating extremism in the Russian Federation up to 2025, which contains a complex of tasks aimed at instilling among young people the capacity to resist socially dangerous behaviour. Under the strategy, regional and municipal educational programmes and teaching materials should provide for the shaping among the younger generation of respect for all ethnic and religious groups and a rejection of intolerance. The strategy provides for universal accessibility to culture, sports and recreation facilities, and improves conditions for young people to attain their creative and sporting potential and cultural development. The intention is to incorporate new educational standards and methods to counter extremism, for example by formulating educational standards for journalists.

We call on the specialized counter-terrorism agencies of the United Nations to actively promote the dissemination of national practices that have proven to be effective in this field. We welcome the recent compilation by the Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee of a set of best practices of international and regional organizations in countering violent extremism and incitement to terrorism in the context of the implementation of resolution 1624 (2005). We expect a list of national practices in this area to be drawn up as soon as possible. We are ready to share our experiences with our partners at the international and bilateral levels.

Mr. Barros Melet (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Peace, stability and intercultural harmony are closely interrelated and key to achieving an environment conducive to promoting universal values and full respect for human dignity.

While we in our region have undertaken the difficult task of bridging the gap between wealth and poverty and are seeking to build a brighter common future among different traditions, cultures and nations, the Middle East is fighting an even more pressing struggle that poses a challenge to civilizations and faiths. Humankind must preserve the multicultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious character of that region. Multiple crises show how the stresses associated with cultural and religious identity can generate destabilizing cycles that affect international peace and security.

Chile thanks Jordan for organizing this debate, which gives us the opportunity to share our views and experiences and to define how the international community can help to overcome the conditions that promote violent extremism. The attraction of young people to radical extremism has become a threat to the democratic societies, respectful and tolerant of diversity, that we all want to build. The emergence of certain groups, including jihadist ones, can be directly linked with the identity crisis that affects both generations that have remained in their countries of origin as well as those that have been woven into a new social fabric.

Leaders and societies from all regions of the world have been struck by the number of young people drawn to extremism, and are being called upon not only to punish such behavior but, rather, to address the root causes of the phenomenon. Media outlets have publicized the crimes of young people recruited by terrorist organizations, including the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, Al-Qaida, Al-Shabaab, Ansar Al-Sharia and the Al-Nusra Front. Faced with those acts, the international community cannot remain indifferent, and the Council has both an ethical and political responsibility to counter acts that deny fundamental human values.

In some West African countries, youth as young as 15-years of age have been recruited through powerful persuasion, mainly via social networks, which have helped to attract a significant number of followers. The new communication and information technologies should not serve such purposes.

We believe it is necessary to identify the underlying causes attracting youth to follow violent terrorism and related doctrines. Inevitably, there must be a focus on young people's motivation to erroneously seek that sense of identity and belonging. It is due to a number of factors, including feelings of alienation, exclusion and marginalization and insecurity and vulnerability, which can stimulate violent extremism. Several reports have been drafted in the context of United Nations missions in the Middle East and Africa, explaining the importance of implementing appropriate measures to counteract the frustration of those who rebel against social and cultural structures that do not satisfy their hopes and aspirations.

As noted by President Michelle Bachelet Jeria in the debate on inclusive development of 19 January,

> "We believe that closing gaps in income and position in the social structure is as important as promoting equal opportunities. It is not only a moral imperative, but also a requirement for medium-term and long-term development, for political stability and for peace." (*S/PV.7361, p. 7*)

Our country has promoted the concept of inclusive development, with the key participation of young people, as a transformative mechanism underlying causes of conflict. Identifying the youth involved in such behaviour and punishing them is insufficient. We must seek effective solutions through inclusive development strategies that will pave the way for opportunities for youth.

In the same vein, those strategies must address gender issues and, in particular, the situation of women who are recruited by armed groups and subjected to violence, including sexual violence as a war tactic. Women are victims of actions by non-State armed groups that are used to spread terror and suffer not only the scourge of gender aggression, but also, and worse, stigmatization by religious extremism.

Tackling the factors that lead to radical violence by youth requires strategies to prevent the socioeconomic exclusion of young people. We urge the international community to continue promoting the effective implementation of resolutions 1624 (2005) and 2178 (2014), which send clear messages on the prevention of incitement to terrorism and confronting the phenomenon of foreign terrorist combatants.

The question must be asked about ways in which the United Nations and the Council can help to prevent and reduce young people's membership in violent groups. In Jordan's letter to the Secretary-General (S/2015/231) and the annexed concept paper, a set of actions has been identified constituting a holistic response to the situation which seriously affects the system's values. Young people must become protagonists in developing responses based on profound respect for and knowledge of human rights, tolerance and democracy.

We consider it essential to empower youth and enhance their skills, through participation that would ensure their capacity to influence practices and policies affecting them, including those aimed at countering violent extremism. That is how we view the social, political, economic and cultural participation of youth. Young people can provide sustainable ways of combating the phenomenon, using information technology and questioning the narratives, either online of offline. That is part of the right to have rights under democracy.

The Alliance of Civilizations 2013-2018 action plan provides a road map with specific recommendations to promote understanding, in line with strengthening a cosmopolitan view of democracy based on human rights and international law, as suggested by Jürgen Habermas, and thereby prevent false perceptions that threaten stability and fuel conflict.

We support the initiative of Spain to convene a high-level regional conference of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001), concerning counter-terrorism, in Madrid, next July. We believe it would serve as a political opportunity to contribute to halting the recruitment and flow of foreign combatants, with the goal of having States adopt measures on domestic and international cooperation.

We join those calling for building public-private partnerships designed to counter the messages of radical organizations for recruiting new youth.

Chile has undertaken significant reforms to eradicate exclusion and discrimination of youth, one of which resulted in the enactment of a law against discrimination. Our young people have gone into the streets and prompted massive demonstrations to demand a transformation of the education system, which then led to a reform process that is currently under way.

We wish to conclude by thanking the presidency of Jordan for convening this meeting to consider a topic that involves those who will shoulder the future responsibility of guiding our societies. Our response must be commensurate with the values we defend — those that respect identity and diversity.

Mr. McLay (New Zealand): I thank the delegation of Jordan for convening this truly important debate. Indeed, I think I can say at this stage that it is a quite extraordinary event, for all sorts of reasons. You, Sir, have emphasized the importance of the occasion by bringing your Crown Prince to the table: your country's future, your kingdom's future.

Allow me also to thank our two briefers — Mr. Peter Neumann and Mr. Scott Atran — for their quite remarkable presentations. As I listened to the two

gentlemen I could not help but ask why I have had to sit for four months, at this particular table, before I heard an outside contribution of that sort of value and that sort of experience. The Security Council needs to hear more of such wisdom and such knowledge.

Through you, sir, may I thank His Royal Highness for his presence today and for his insightful comments: not commentary on youth — which is all that I can offer — but commentary by youth, and extraordinarily valuable for that reason, alone.

As others have done, we should start by acknowledging that youth has been radicalized throughout history, but in times past, the dissemination of radical ideas, radical advocacy and any radical recruitment took weeks, months and even years. Today, those same messages are transmitted with instant effect. The social media and communication skills of groups like Daesh have accelerated and globalized the dissemination process and made it even more difficult to undertake effective counter-measures. Too often, the damage has been done; the evil has been spread before we even know it. The tools of this modern world that we now take for granted, combined with the increasingly young demographic of many countries, contribute to an environment where those with ill intent can target, exploit and radicalize the young with previously unimaginable speed and previously unparalleled intensity.

It is wrong to lay blame for violent extremism at the feet of the young; indeed, we are grateful to Jordan for focusing today's debate on the role that youth can play in combatting violent terrorism. New Zealand therefore takes this opportunity to offer just three suggestions for better tackling the radicalization of youth.

First, Governments must recognize that national and local contexts really do matter. Even if sometimes presented as an international message and package, the real factors that motivate young people to follow an extremist path are almost always local, as Mr. Atran emphasized in his presentation. If we are going to address youth radicalization successfully, we must identify the domestic or local pressures that marginalize our vulnerable youth. We must ask how terrorist groups are so successful in exploiting and manipulating these pressures in order to radicalize and recruit. Do they make youth dream, as Mr. Atran suggested?

We must then specifically tailor our responses to those factors, with Governments, communities and young people all working together in partnership. The resulting counter-violent extremism programmes must demonstrate to our young people that they can have a real stake in their society and must help to develop trust in State authority, and — again, as Mr. Atran emphasized — getting young people to trust State Authority is never going to be easy. It never has been easy. They are not necessarily attracted by any notions of the modern nation State. These partnerships of trust should be based on an understanding of radicalization that goes far beyond the security lens, so we thank Jordan for giving this debate that broader perspective as well.

If we treat at-risk young people only as the objects of security concern, we grossly oversimplify the issue and perpetuate the marginalization that often contributes to violent extremism. Partnerships with young people and their communities must be based on inclusion and respect. Families are often the first responders to those starting down the path to violent extremism, and those families must be supported in their efforts to challenge propaganda, provide leadership and offer credible, alternative narratives to give them that stake in society of which Mr. Neumann spoke, reversing that sense of exclusion.

Secondly, we must empower our young people to create a social force — their own social force, not one that we control — which rejects violence as a means of achieving their goals. Mr. Atran described such a programme in North-West Pakistan. The Council emphasised that very point last year in resolution 2178 (2014), which encourages States to empower community leaders, families, parents and fellow youth to meet the challenge of violent extremism. Too often, families and communities have watched helplessly as groups like Daesh spread their message of hate by using the tools of the modern age with skill and sophistication. As Mr. Neumann urged, we need tailored solutions using those very tools.

But even as young people are the targets of radicalization and violent extremism, those same young people are also well equipped to combat that messaging, and they can do so at a technological, ideological and social level that they know, understand and can use to great advantage. The most effective counter-violent extremism programmes are those that harness the energy, passion and creativity of young people, who are already collaborating online and who naturally respond to that sort of challenge.

Thirdly, we urge States to contribute to and draw from the experience of others, not least, in respect of effective measures initiated by young people themselves. We welcome recent efforts to coordinate international activity and to share experiences, such as the White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism and the work of the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum, in particular the Abu Dhabi Memorandum on Good Practices for Education and Countering Violent Extremism.

As the Council and United Nations counter-terrorism entities focus on supporting States to implement resolutions to counter violent extremism, we strongly urge that we make building durable partnerships with our young people — partnerships that promote peace and combat violent extremism — an essential feature of the measures that we adopt. The Secretary-General reminded us that young people represent promise, not peril. We should never regard youth as a problem; we should regard it as a solution.

This is the last time that I will speak in the Security Council Chamber, so want to thank my colleagues for their friendship, collegiality, support and — I suspect sometimes — for their patience. I wish the Council well as it deals with the many threats to international peace and security.

The President: I can assure Ambassador McLay that it is not goodbye but farewell, and we look forward to his future contributions in any capacity. His wisdom and experience are much needed in today's volatile world. I thank him sincerely and I am sorry that we worked him very hard right to the end, but that was intentional.

Mr. Liu Jieyi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China commends Jordan for its initiative in convening today's open debate, and we welcome Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II and Minister for Foreign Affairs Judeh to New York to preside over the Security Council. I would like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his briefing.

In recent years, terrorism and violent extremism have run rampant in some regions of the world. Some young people have been deceived, incited or coerced by terrorist organizations and violent extremist ideologies, and become the tools and victims of terrorist and extremist activities, attracting the heightened attention and awareness of the international community. Young people are the future of the world. Protecting them from the dangers of terrorism and violent extremism is the common responsibility of the international community. China believes that the international community should take the following measures.

First, we should resolutely fight terrorism and violent extremism. Terrorism and extremism are the public enemies of humankind. The international community should make concerted and determined efforts in countering all forms of terrorism and violent extremist activities and create a peaceful and stable environment for the development of young people. Counter-terrorism activities should abide by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations — respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the countries concerned — and give full play to the leading role of the United Nations and the Security Council. Anti-terrorism efforts should not adopt double standards, much less associate terrorism with a specific ethnicity or religion.

Secondly, the channels through which terrorists and extremist force deceive and incite youth must be cut off. At present, terrorists and extremist forces use the Internet and other new media to propagate terrorist and extremist ideologies and to deceive and incite young people, causing serious harm. The United Nations counter-terrorism mechanisms should actively promote strengthened cooperation on the part of the international community; adopt effective measures to resolutely counter attempts by terrorists and extremist forces to use the Internet for such activities as recruitment, incitement and planning and fund-raising; frustrate their attempts to target young people.

Thirdly, the root causes of terrorism and violent extremism must be eliminated. Poverty, unemployment and underdevelopment are fertile ground for terrorism and violent extremism, and major factors that make youth susceptible to the misguidance of those forces. The international community should pay close attention to the issue of development and actively help the countries concerned with their economic recovery and development. All countries should strengthen their efforts to educate and provide employment opportunities for youth. The United Nations and other international organizations should also continue to play an active role in helping the countries concerned, in particular developing countries, upgrade their capacity to nurture and assist young people.

Fourthly, dialogue among civilizations should be strengthened to combat terrorist and extremist ideologies. Diversity among civilizations is the basic feature of human society, and dialogue among civilizations is an important path to achieving mutual understanding, respect and peaceful coexistence among different ethnicities, cultures and religions. It is also an effective tool for helping the youth reject violence and eschew terrorist and extremist ideas. The international community, including the relevant United Nations agencies, should vigorously advocate the spirit of the dialogue of civilizations, namely, respect, openness and inclusiveness; promote enhanced exchanges and mutual learning among people in all circles of society, including young people; and foster an enabling social environment in which all ethnic groups, cultures and religions are treated as equals and coexist harmoniously and peacefully.

Youth represent the future of the world's development and peace. China is ready to join the international community in actively fighting terrorist and violent extremist actions, safeguarding world peace and stability, and creating a harmonious, peaceful and stable environment for the healthy development of young people.

Mr. Cherif (Chad) (*spoke in French*): First, I would like to welcome Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II, and to thank Jordan for having organized this meeting on the role of youth in countering violent extremism and promoting peace. I also welcome the presence of the ministers who have joined us. I also thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Mr. Peter Neumann and Mr. Scott Atran for their interventions.

Chad would like to associate itself with the statement to be made by the representative of the African Union.

The global security context has been characterized by an increase in terrorism, which is one of today's most serious threats to international peace and security. The recent plethora and barbarity of violent terrorist acts have plunged us into sadness and despair. Chad condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. I will focus on the issues raised in the concept paper (S/2015/231, annex) on this very important topic.

With regard to young people and the factors that lead to their radicalization, understanding the process of radicalization is crucial to our being able to react properly to violent extremism and to prevent young people from embarking on the path of violence. Indeed, young people constitute a breeding ground for extremist group recruitment; however, at the same time, they are the victims of such groups. The conditions that foster their radicalization change from one country to another, but, according to many observers of the phenomenon, the main factors include poverty, ignorance, inequality, injustice, unemployment and exclusion from social, political and economic life, whether actual or perceived. Even though some reject the idea that poverty can lead to radical extremism, the gap between the expectations and the socioeconomic realities of an individual or community can create an environment that is conducive to radicalization. In that regard, as far as Africa is concerned, the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict in Africa and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development there (S/2013/475) is very edifying.

Some, rightly or wrongly, consider religion to be a factor in radicalization. However, no religion in the world encourages its followers to commit violent acts on its behalf. For that reason, violent extremism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality or civilization. Moreover, military intervention carried out in violation of international law and the sovereignty and political independence of States can be found among the causes of radicalization. Such interventions not only often provide a breeding ground for violent extremism, but also only bring about more war, oppression and violence, thereby destabilizng entire regions.

Terrorism, as a threat to international peace and security, does not recognize any borders. Terrorist groups have well organized networks that span the entire world. The fact that groups active in Africa, such as Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, Al-Shabaab, Boko Haram and others, are affiliated with Al-Qaida or the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant is an excellent illustration of that fact. The main responsibility for addressing that situation rests on the shoulder of States and international organizations. It is urgent that they take the measures needed to eliminate the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, in accordance with the first pillar of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

With regard to how we can go about decreasing radicalization and the recruitment of young people, it is extremely important to prevent terrorists from using modern information and communications technologies for the purposes of recruitment and propaganda. The

Internet, social networks and television are among their preferred platforms. It is essential to take measures to limit the use of those technologies for criminal and terrorist purposes, while still respecting the rights of individuals. The combat against violent extremism also requires a focus on the education of young people, who must be inculcated with the values, tools and skills essential for individual success, and on the promotion of economic opportunities for groups at risk. Emphasis must also be placed on programmes for the deradicalization, disindocrination and reeducation of youth, including reintegration and rehabilitation. Youth organizations themselves can be enlisted in activities aimed at combating violent extremism.

With respect to foreign combatants, it is normal to be worried by the departure of foreign nationals from various countries for the conflict zones of Syria and Iraq. We encourage international cooperation to strengthen exchanges in intelligence and border control, so as to bring terrorists to justice. We believe that the best policy for discouraging the outflow of foreign combatants towards Syria and Iraq is to resolve the conflicts in those countries.

With respect to national efforts to combat terrorism and youth recruitment, Chad supports the culture of peace, tolerance and religious pluralism. In that vein, a number of measures have been taken in line with resolution 1624 (2005), including the establishment of an annual day of prayers for peace, bringing together the three principal faiths practiced in our country, namely, Islam, Catholicism and Protestantism. Moreover, the leaders of those three faiths have created an inter-religious platform to promote peaceful coexistence and are represented in all regions. Furthermore, within the framework of subregional and regional strategies, Chad is reinforcing its security cooperation with its neighbours and has deployed large contingents to neutralize terrorist groups in the north of Mali, while continuing its contribution to the fight against Boko Haram in Cameroon, the Niger and Nigeria at the cost of enormous human and material sacrifice.

Concerning the role that the United Nations, in particular the Security Council, can play to strengthen efforts to combat violent extremism, we support the proposals of the Jordanian delegation in its concept paper (S/2015/231, annex). We hope that they will strengthen the goals of preventing incitement to terrorism and of stemming the flow of foreign combatants, in accordance with resolutions 1624 (2005) and 2178 (2014). We also welcome Jordan's initiative to organize an international conference in August 2016 on the role of youth in promoting world peace.

To conclude, the threat of violent extremism is by now abundantly clear. The fight against that threat must be shared by all States and international organizations, including the United Nations, which can and must strengthen their cooperation by pooling efforts and resources and putting youth at the heart of their agendas. It is urgent for us to collectively prevent and resolve conflicts, promote socioeconomic development and foster dialogue by stressing education and tolerance.

Ms. Murmokaitė (Lithuania): We thank the delegation of Jordan for organizing this timely debate and the briefers for their presentations.

Radicalization and violent extremism pose an increasingly pressing threat to international peace and security. Today, foreign terrorist fighters have come from some 100 States, as recruitment networks expand their global reach. Young people fall into the trap of those networks for multiple reasons, as diverse as the individuals themselves. Identity issues, peer pressure, online and personal connections, the failure to see the distinction between the violent world of video gaming and reality, alienation, social exclusion, a misguided search for the meaning of life, and perceived injustices in the world — many things can trigger radicalization. Many have little if any idea about the faith that they claim to defend.

Some are abducted, forcefully converted and forced to fight, like the Yazidi victims of Daesh or the girls, some as young as eight years old, turned by Boko Haram into suicide attackers in Nigeria. Some are pushed onto the deadly path by circumstances of extreme desperation and hopelessness. Some are radicalized in prisons. Many even come from normal families and safe environments where they enjoyed all the comforts of life and opportunities for the future. It is particularly troubling that such young people should reject all that society has to offer and choose the obscurantist, murderous ideologies that radical extremists and terrorists profess. It is even more mind-boggling to think that, while many girls and women across the globe are fighting against abuse and for their rights and human dignity, girls from normal families would willingly choose to become jihadi brides, serving those who abuse and rape and sell women into slavery.

While it is obvious that the causes are as diverse as the individuals, it remains important to establish at least some patterns in order to counteract violent extremism and radicalization. There is no one-size-fits-all model of how and why a young person is radicalized. Correspondingly, there is no one-size-fits-all way of addressing the issue. As we seek to develop effective counter measures against that highly dangerous phenomenon, it is important to make sure that we avoid profiling people on religious, ethnic or any other grounds. Since violent extremism is multifaceted and multidimensional, our responses too must be multidimensional and multifaceted, and they must be articulated at all levels, from local to national to regional to international, with the involvement of role models, moral authorities, religious and community leaders, former recruits who have managed to escape and reintegrate, civil-society groups, the private sector, academia and Governments.

We do not need to start from scratch. Violent extremism has been high on the agenda of the United Nations for some time. Last year, for instance, concern about the spread of the violent extremist ideologies that underpin the terrorist narrative was reiterated both during the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy Review and in resolution 2178 (2014) on foreign terrorist fighters. The Counter-Terrorism Committee, with the support of its Executive Directorate, has developed a wealth of expertise over the past decade with regard to associated risks, gaps and recommendations on future actions. The Executive Directorate's recent creation of a network of academic partners can play an important role in support of the work already carried out. Joint efforts by the United Nations machinery, along with regional, national and local actors, are needed, based on the comparative strengths and expertise of each partner involved, to develop effective, target-specific antidotes to violent extremist propaganda. Rule of law institutions also have a critical role to play. Border and security cooperation, as well as information- and intelligence-sharing to facilitate the tracking of the cross-border movements of young people, need to be strengthened, since stopping potential recruits at the border can often be the last line of defence for preventing them from falling into terrorist hands.

As recruitment flourishes on the Internet, it is essential, as others have said, to engage with Web professionals and the wider community of Internet users in order to develop adequate security measures without impinging on the freedoms of expression and opinion.

Education is highly important, and the education of girls in particular. No wonder terrorists are attacking girls' schools and their teachers with such fury. They know that an educated girl, conscious of her choices and rights in life, is an excellent antidote against the blind subservient ignorance that they are seeking to impose. Fostering critical thinking is key to cutting through extremist narratives. Human rights and tolerance education should be part and parcel of broader education efforts. Clear perspectives for the future, through education, skills development and job and entrepreneurship opportunities, matter everywhere, but they are especially important in conflict-affected areas, including among internally displaced persons and refugees, so that in their desperation such people do not fall prey to radicalization. Particular attention should be paid to juvenile and young prison inmates, since prisons and detention centres are often prime locations for recruitment.

It is imperative that we improve strategic communication at all levels and that we develop effective, targeted messages that demolish the gloss and false righteousness of the narratives of the likes of Daesh and Boko Haram. We must expose their hypocrisy and the monstrosity of the crimes that they commit under false pretexts. Since terrorists like to hide behind a veneer of faith, it is also key to cut through that veneer and expose the abysmal gap between what faith really is and what is being done in its name by violent extremists. We have to be very clear that, whatever the ills or injustices in the world the extremists claim to be rectifying by their deadly choices, beheadings; maiming; throwing people from high towers; burning them alive, such as the monstrous murder of a Jordanian pilot; or stoning to death do not address any injustice or ill. On the contrary, such depraved acts add in a most brutal and sick way to the ills of this world and are nothing but the most brutal and cynical criminality.

While all levels should be involved in tackling the issue of youth radicalization, the grass-roots level is particularly important. It is at the grass-roots level in local communities that vulnerabilities are felt and exposed, and disaffections and marginalization take place, providing fertile ground for recruiters. Non-governmental organizations, volunteer groups and civil-society activism offer important ways to strengthen the connection between young people and

the communities they live in, foster a sense of belonging and ownership, help overcome a sense of alienation and provide positive life models for young people to follow.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Before moving on to the next item, I would like to thank all the members of the Security Council for their statements. In particular, I would like to thank the Ministers, Ministers of State and the Deputy Minister who have taken the trouble to travel to come and be with us today in view of the importance of our subject.

I now wish to remind all speakers to kindly limit their statements to no more than four minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate their texts in writing and deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber. It is our intention to use the flashing light on the collar of the speakers' microphones to indicate when the time allocated has elapsed. I would also like to appeal to speakers to deliver their statements at a reasonable speed so that interpretation can be accurately provided. I also wish to inform all concerned that we will be carrying on this open debate through the lunch hour in view of the large number of speakers.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Sameh Hassan Shokry Selim, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt. I would like to thank him for having taken the trouble to travel to be with us in the Chamber today in person.

Mr. Selim (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to extend our thanks to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for its initiative to convene this important meeting. We greatly value the presence of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II of Jordan, presiding over this Security Council meeting on a very important issue that all of our countries must seriously address, as well as the consequences that could ensue and threaten the security of our citizens and even international peace and security.

A number of factors together have led to the fact that our communities are now afflicted with currents in the form of groups and factions that have embraced extremist ideas and views that have nothing to do with religion and tolerance. What is worse is that they have started imposing those views on people, in particular youth. That reveals the nature of their clash with society, which is, in essence, nothing but an intellectual aberration, as they refuse to live or coexist with other segments of society. They do not wish to integrate into society, and they focus on and magnify points of discord. That leads to friction and strife, and impedes the progress of the State and individual citizens. Those individuals thereby isolate themselves by believing that the community in which they live is a pagan one that does not deserve to be lived in.

Within that context and taking into consideration the various aspects of terrorism, we must give priority to addressing extremism wherever it is found, because it paves the way for terrorism. In all our actions we must give particular attention to young people and always keep them in mind. One of our priorities should always be to keep them from falling into the clutches of extremism and terrorism in particular, because the youth in many of our States constitute the largest proportion of the population. We must also take into account the ferocious campaigns against youth in all States, in particular campaigns that have been orchestrated recently in an attempt to recruit young people as fighters in terrorist groups by using religion as a means to ends that have no connection whatsoever to any religion.

At the outset, it is necessary to recognize that the phenomenon of extremism is a reality that we cannot overlook and that we must counter. In that regard, we have to address its causes. That is something that we have recognized in Egypt, where the President has recently called for the renewal of religious dialogue aimed at countering extremism and ensuring the necessary and appropriate interpretation of Islam and its tenets. We have taken serious steps in that direction.

First, we must analyse extremism and terrorism and counter them with irrefutable arguments and evidence. The matter cannot be restricted to taking security measures. In that respect, we must adopt a consensus-based and tolerant method that leads not to half solutions, but to tolerant and consensus-based solutions. We must also avoid all obscurantist views that lead people who embrace such ideas to believe that the world is divided into only two groups — those who believe what they do and those who are infidels — only good and evil. In that regard, we must make sure that youth, who do not have the ability to correctly interpret those views themselves, are always informed by those who are able to provide them with appropriate interpretations, and that they are made aware of the nature of the exigencies of such interpretations with regard to their circumstances, so that there would

be no discord or contention. In addition, there have been a number of economic and political reasons that have led to extremism among youth and to their resorting to violence, including access to adequate education, the lack of opportunities to make a decent living, unemployment, poverty, the marginalization of foreigners, foreign occupation and the lack of recognition of a people's right to self-determination. All of those factors must be addressed very seriously by strengthening cooperation, by adopting relevant strategies, by implementing the relevant Security Council resolutions and by refraining from extending support to extremists and terrorists.

I would like to underline that the fact that today we see more youth from the Muslim and other minorities in Western States who seek to join terrorist groups as foreign combatants, especially in Iraq, Syria, Libya and in Africa, makes it necessary for those States to review their policies so as to integrate Muslims into their communities, curb transgressive acts against religion and prophets and adopt the necessary steps that would put an end to the recruitment by those terrorist organizations. On the other hand, it is necessary to implement the various relevant Security Council resolutions and hold accountable those States that instigate and provide support and funding to those who use foreign terrorist combatants.

We must also recognize that this phenomenon is capable of refuting the argument that the reason for terrorism is the system of government and the economic and social pressures that bear upon society. The fact that this phenomenon is spreading in countries where remarkable gains have been made is itself testimony to the fact that there are organizations that are seeking to use religion for other objectives.

We in Egypt have for many years understood and recognized the dangers of extremism and terrorism and the need for joint international efforts to address them. We need to adopt a comprehensive strategy in this regard. In addition to our international and regional efforts, we have taken a number of effective steps at the national level, including the numerous initiatives of Al-Azhar, with its moderate, tolerant and enlightened views, to refute mendacious ideas that are affecting young people. These steps include various cultural events explaining the fundaments of the tolerant religion of Islam so that young people do not fall prey to those who spread violence and the takfiris. Moreover, this mission has not been limited to Egypt; many Al-Azhar scholars have visited a number of other countries to explain the moderate and tolerant Islamic way of thinking. Moreover, the Department of Fatwah in Egypt has created an observatory that uses scientific methodologies to monitor takfiri fatwahs and expose their defective nature.

The Government of Egypt has also made great efforts to raise the standard of university and vocational education so as to nurture young people and help them to find decent work opportunities, which in turn will reduce unemployment and enable young people to engage in the attainment of sustainable development objectives. In political terms, young people are being invited to join the political arena.

Once again, it is extremely important for us to continue discussing this issue and to build on efforts that have already been made, including those of the United Nations. In this context, it could be useful consider the possibility of the Secretary-General preparing a comprehensive report considering this issue from all points of view, including recommendations on a programme of work to be implemented.

I would like once again to thank the Jordanian presidency of the Security Council this month for having convened this important meeting.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the Minister for Justice and Migration of Sweden.

Mr. Johansson (Sweden): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Nordic countries, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and my own country, Sweden.

At the outset, let me thank the Jordanian presidency for taking the initiative to hold this timely high-level debate and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein and Secretary-General Ban for their remarks earlier.

Let me first say a few words about the terrible tragedy that took place in the Mediterranean last weekend. On the night between Saturday and Sunday, 900 people, many of them in their youth, drowned. It is now said that up to 1 million people are waiting in Libya to try to cross the sea. These people drowned on their way to Europe to find a better life.

I bring this up because I believe that this issue is closely linked to what we are talking about today. As Mr. Scott Atran said, we must offer young people a positive personal dream with a concrete chance of realization, or else some young people will turn to

radical religious or political movement. Others, I say, will desperately try to go to other parts of the world, searching for a better life, even if it means risking their lives. These issues have common roots in more ways than one. War and poverty lead to the migrant situation that we now see, but war and poverty also lead to political and religious radicalization.

In Europe, the European Council is meeting today because of the disaster. We say that we must increase our efforts to save lives at sea. We must fight the traffickers who are sending people to their deaths on these boats, but we must also take joint responsibility for the migrant situation, based on the principle that applying for asylum is a human right. The international community must step up its efforts to end the war in Syria and, more importantly than ever, to stabilize Libya. If that is not done, I think many thousands more people, many in their youth, will die in the Mediterranean this year. The European Union has a responsibility, but so has the United Nations in trying to prevent this from happening.

To prevent radicalization, we must stress not only the importance of peace but also the importance of economic and social development. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein pointed out in his speech how many young people there are in the world today. Today's young people — at times called "millennials" — make up 25 per cent of the world's population. Many have faced the harsh realities of terrorist attacks, wars, economic crises and ensuing unemployment. Millions of young people are lone migrants, refugees or internally displaced, uprooted from their homes and families. Not content to be subjects without a voice, the politically aware will strive for civil rights and for citizenship, as they did during the Arab Spring, which appears to have been a youth-driven movement.

But if the search for identity and belonging — existential needs of every human person — is not satisfied by inclusion in a democratic society, frustrated young may look for recognition elsewhere. Not invited to take part in building a peaceful social environment, active young people will find a context and search for a role where they are allowed to perform, and sometimes this takes destructive forms. It is therefore very important that we strengthen the role of young people. Faced with violent conflict, young people can participate as agents of positive change and, given the right educational tools, young people can also be agents of peace.

Last year, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and Education First once again brought together 75 young people — a whopping 75,000 had applied — for an international summer school, where they learned about the United Nations and discussed areas where it can better collaborate with youth organizations to advocate for peace and security around the world.

It is clear that we need to safeguard our democracy and make our societies more resistant against radicalization to violent extremism. This requires local efforts on a global scale. We support Secretary-General's initiative for a United Nations plan of action to prevent violent extremism. Against this background, it is important to acknowledge that many young people already play a role. With courage and dignity, they act as community leaders in peacebuilding, reconciliation and post-conflict reconstruction. However, this is often unseen or simply overlooked. We need to do more to highlight their existing contributions to peace. Peacebuilding is a cornerstone of United Nations systemwide action plan on youth, and the youth dimension needs to be a cornerstone of the United Nations plan of action for preventing violent extremism.

We must recognize young women, like their male contemporaries, as key stakeholders in countering violent extremism. They have unique knowledge, experience and resources that are vital to our efforts. We must understand the different roles that women play in conflict, both as fighters and as peacemakers. This means that young women and young men alike must be included in analysis of extremism; otherwise, we will lose important findings that can contribute to countering extremism and promoting conflict resolution.

The very phenomenon of violent extremism has served as a reminder to all of us on all continents that exclusion can breed fanaticism among majority and minority groups alike. We see Islamophobia and anti-Semitism, as well as discrimination against Christians. Young people from many different countries, including from some of the Nordic countries, have for various reasons been attracted by terrorist propaganda, radicalized and turned into foreign terrorist fighters. This is a serious problem. We need to strengthen the legislation, for instance, by criminalizing travel undertaken to fight for terrorist groups, as the Security Council has called on all Member States to do. But that is not enough; we need to do more.

The Nordic countries believe that our strongest counter-narrative is our firm commitment to democracy, human rights and equality as the most effective tools to prevent radicalization into terrorism. In addition, we emphasize that economic growth and resolute efforts to manage rapid population growth alleviate the extreme poverty that threatens global peace and prosperity. The White House Countering Violent Extremism Summit established an ambitious framework for our efforts against violent extremism, and the Nordic countries are taking an active part in the follow-up efforts. We share a common interest in embracing and enhancing the role of our youth in countering violent extremism and promoting peace.

I would like to conclude by quoting a young, second generation Swede who previously harboured sympathies with radical groups but who has today renounced these views:

> "From wanting to bring terror and chaos to society, I now want to help others finding themselves in the same situation as I was. I have lots of experience. I know the circumstances. And it is my duty to give something back to our society."

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Italy.

Mr. Lambertini (Italy): I thank the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for organizing today's open debate and, in particular His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein for chairing the meeting and for his inspiring words.

Italy aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the Head of Delegation of the European Union. I wish to make the following remarks in my national capacity.

Today's open debate enables us to think more strategically about the role of youth in countering violent extremism. According to the latest statistics, the current youth population — people between the ages of 10 and 24 — is the largest ever, comprising some 1.8 billion people, 600 million of whom are girls. Most of these 1.8 billion live in developing countries. They are the world's best hope for addressing our most pressing challenges in the long term, particularly the question of how to counter violent extremism and promote peace. As the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Mr. Paolo Gentiloni, has stated repeatedly, the fight against violent extremism has to be waged at different levels — in terms of narrative, values and financing.

This brings me to the second underlying theme of today's debate: the importance of prevention. In the past decade, extremist ideologies have increased their appeal to youth through communication campaigns that target this specific demographic. It is both a moral obligation and a strategic investment for us to turn the tide. By countering the appeal of violent and extremist groups among young people, we will deny these groups access to their most valuable resource, pulling the rug out from under their feet. We should therefore not be asking ourselves what role young people can play in countering violent extremism and promoting peace. We should be asking how young people themselves can be the heart of the solution. To this end, we have identified areas that we should be targeting.

Our first area of focus should be education. The abduction of students and the targeting of schools and universities by violent and extremist groups are a clear sign of their weakness. Culture and education are their worst enemy. At the same time, however, they are our best allies in promoting tolerance, inclusiveness and open-mindedness. In the wake of the horrific attack on the Garissa campus in Kenya, Minister Gentiloni paid an official visit to Nairobi to renew our full support for Kenya in that hour of tragedy, pay respect to the victims and signal that the fight against terrorism and the protection of the right to education are a shared value. As tangible proof of our friendship, we have offered scholarships to Garissa campus students in order to send the message that guaranteeing access to quality education, no matter what circumstances, is our best counter-attack to violent extremism.

Secondly, we need to focus on human rights and justice. To promote peaceful, inclusive and just societies, we must defend and support the shared values under attack. Human rights must be returned to the centre of the agenda. In this respect, we must not underestimate the preventive power of justice by upholding the rule of law and accountability.

Thirdly, socioeconomic development is essential. Unfulfilled expectations, unemployment, underemployment and inequality are all factors that have the potential to drive idle and dissatisfied young people down the path to embracing radical, violent ideologies. In defining the post-2015 agenda, we must be mindful of the positive impact that a universal, innovative, easily

communicated agenda could have on youth living in developing countries.

Fourthly, we must focus on private/public partnerships, including media. The proactive involvement of civil society is essential for us to succeed. Governments and the international community have to provide an enabling environment and lead with projects. But a joint effort is needed to fill in the framework. Social media has a special role to play in countering the narrative proposed by violent extremist groups, which makes it vital that this issue be addressed through the Framework of Analysis for the Prevention of Atrocity Crimes, which Italy supports. Social media can have both a negative and a positive effect. It can aggravate the risk of atrocity crimes, by spreading hate speech and inciting people to commit such crimes, but it can also curb messages of intolerance, hatred and violence. The new Framework provides analytical tools for detecting early warning signs through the examination of the socioeconomic conditions affecting young people.

Lastly, we need to focus on empowerment. Sometimes the problem is not the message but the messenger. Empowerment of youth and youth-oriented organizations is essential to promoting positive role models, responding to violence, and delegitimizing extremist messages. Priority should be given to empowering those 600 million young women.

It is in this light that Italy proudly supports the Change the World Model United Nations. Every year, our Mission organizes a public event that brings together young people from all over the world to discuss the three main pillars of the United Nations: international peace and security, human rights and development. Just a month ago, more than 1,500 young people from over 90 countries met at the General Assembly to discuss how to make the world a safer, better place. By promoting this event, we are planting a seed for the future. It is up to us to assure that this seed has the proper international environment in which to grow and develop.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mr. Antonio de Aguiar Patriota (Brazil): Brazil congratulates Jordan for organizing this meeting. It is a welcome development that improving prevention is at the centre of this debate. In order to overcome terrorism, structural causes, such as exclusion, marginalization and discrimination, cannot be overlooked.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his briefing and extend my thanks to Mr. Peter Neumann and Mr. Scott Atran as well.

Countering terrorism is a goal that has a galvanizing potential. This can be demonstrated by the fact that the Security Council has often been able to reach consensus on counter-terrorism issues, even as it has remained divided on other equally important topics. While the ultimate goal potentially brings us together, some of the tools chosen to implement counter-terrorism efforts, particularly the use of force, have been divisive and ultimately counterproductive.

Counter-terrorism efforts will be effective to the extent that they are consistent with the Charter of the United Nations, international refugee and humanitarian law, human rights. including the freedom of speech and the right to privacy, and other norms of international law. If the fight against terrorism takes place at the expense of international legal parameters, it will have defeated its purpose.

Unemployment and marginalization are factors that have contributed to creating a sense of lack of opportunities for youth. Social inequities and political injustices have been known to erode young people's prospects, thereby increasing their vulnerability to extremist narratives. As precisely diagnosed in this debate's concept paper (S/2015/231, annex), terrorist entities have been attracting young people by offering them a false sense of purpose, belonging and identity.

In order to counter these narratives, we must stand united in underscoring the importance of dialogue among cultures and religions and promoting a culture of peace. Initiatives such as the Alliance of Civilizations, which promotes tolerance and mutual respect, contribute to dispel the stereotypes that tend to associate terrorism with specific cultures, religions or ethnic groups. Initiatives on youth education which combat the perpetuation of a culture of animosity also assist in the establishment of an environment less prone to radicalization. The legitimate grievances that have been pushing young people towards violence and extremism need to be tackled with a sense of urgency. Intolerance thrives where social, political, economic or cultural exclusion exists. Promoting social justice is key to eliminating the underlying causes of terrorism. While it would be erroneous to establish an automatic chain of causality between poverty and terrorism, young people are less vulnerable to radicalism in

inclusive societies where there is social justice and there are equal job opportunities.

We also believe that there is a need for a more comprehensive approach to public policies aimed at young people and their empowerment. Policies and programmes focused on the concession of grants and loans for university studies, access to vocational training and the creation of decent jobs for youth should be seriously considered.

We are concerned by the lack of coherence between the consensus on the need to promote the welfare of youth and the reduction of the United Nations budget for development assistance. Any consistent commitment to protect youth from radicalism will be undermined if United Nations activities dedicated to promoting development continue to be the preferential victims of budgetary cuts.

Countering extremism necessarily involves diplomatic efforts to bring about peace, founded on justice, to conflicts that directly or indirectly fuel terrorist agendas. Our collective failure to deal adequately with the ongoing crises in the Middle East — including the Israel-Palestine conflict — deprives us of a powerful argument to counter the dissemination of radicalization. The recurrent use of force as a means to solve conflicts, at the expense of diplomacy and the peaceful settlement of disputes, has only contributed to generating further violence and strengthening the discourse of extremism.

There are no excuses for terrorist acts. We reiterate our commitment to a multidimensional response to the challenges posed by extremism, and we remain convinced that cooperation and dialogue within the United Nations will enhance our capacity to counter that plague. We will only succeed if we join efforts on the basis of shared values and enhanced multilateral cooperation.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of India.

Mr. Bishnoi (India): We thank you the President for organizing this debate, and we join other speakers in welcoming the presence among us, earlier today, of His Royal Highness the Crown Prince of Jordan. Countering violent extremism is one of the most important challenges before the international community note. We also take the opportunity to thank the Secretary-General and the others who have provided briefings to the Council today.

The concept paper (S/2015/231, annex) seems to argue that youth are central to the problem of violent extremism and that it is somehow through social and economic development that the challenge needs to be addressed. I would like to say, with all due respect, that our understanding is somewhat different. We therefore welcome this opportunity to share our perspective.

First, in our view, we need to acknowledge that it is the absence of State authority, or weak State authority, that provides the breeding ground for violent extremist organizations to operate. The fact that there are conditions of poverty and unemployment is secondary. In fact, those conditions also result from the absence of strong State authority.

Secondly, religious fanaticism is responsible for violent extremism. The purveyors of hate and those who characterize others as infidels are the culprits; youth are only cannon fodder. While there is indeed merit in empowering and educating youth, the more obvious need is to restrain those who engage in the politics of hate. That is the responsibility of the State and not one that can be exercised selectively. Terrorism is evil. There can be no good terrorist or bad terrorist. In the same way that extremism and violent extremism are always evil, there should be zero tolerance.

It is the responsibility of States to ensure that their education systems do not promote hatred and bigotry. It is important that traditional learning systems promote harmony and the brotherhood of all humankind. In India, we seek to ensure that our textbooks reflect our rich heritage of diversity. Tradition and culture should be preserved in a spirit of responsibility and tolerance. It is also the responsibility of States to ensure that the media, including social media, are not used to incite and propagate hatred. As was said earlier, States that do not take such responsibilities seriously do so at their own peril. In today's interconnected world, they do so at the peril of others as well.

Lastly, a truly democratic, inclusive and participatory form of Government will go a long way towards preventing conditions that lead to violent extremism. It is important that no section of society feel excluded or marginalized. That is certainly be the surest way of preventing radicalization.

India is one nation, with many faiths and diverse beliefs. It is a nation whose unity is strengthened by its pluralism. It is our firm belief that ultimately the values

represented by open and tolerant societies will be the best foil to the forces of violent extremism.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I draw the attention of the Council to the fact that the concept paper (S/2015/231, annex) contains a number of ideas, including the top-down and bottom-up approaches.

I now give the floor to Mr. Téte António, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations.

Mr. António: On behalf of the African Union (AU) Commission I wish to extend a special welcome to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II and to thank him for his presence among us today, which attests to his personal commitment and that of his country regarding the critical global phenomenon of violent extremism. I also wish to extend a special welcome to the honourable ministers and other high-level officials who have been present at this meeting. I also wish to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Mr. Peter Neumann and Mr. Scott Atran for their comprehensive briefings.

In Africa, terrorism and violent extremism continue to represent the most serious threat to peace and security. Terrorist groups, such as Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa, Boko Haram, Les défenseurs des musulmans en Afrique noire "Ansaru" and Al-Shabaab, have displayed an increased capacity for enlisting youth into their ranks.

In the report presented to the meeting of the African Union Peace and Security Council held on 2 September 2014 in Nairobi, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission outlined factors that have contributed to creating a breeding ground for alienation and radicalization. They include, but are not limited to, widespread conditions of conflict and poverty, marginalization, human-rights violations, unresolved conflicts, ethnic, national and religion-based discrimination and the lack of employment and opportunities for youth. Those factors, coupled with the growing exploitation of technology such as the Internet, have given the terrorists a wide-ranging reach.

Therefore, while we consider solutions and ways to counter the threats posed by terrorists, it is equally imperative to engage in addressing the conditions that contribute to fuelling radicalization and violent extremism. Only then can we effectively and sustainably protect our territories and, more important, our youth against terrorism and related phenomenona.

For Africa, extracting its youth from indoctrinization and radicalization remains a priority, given that young people comprise over 60 per cent of Africa's combined population and represent a huge potential demographic dividend, as underlined by Secretary of State Manuel Augusto of Angola.

Over the past two decades, the relevant AU policy organs have adopted a number of instruments designed to facilitate and promote coordinated and effective action against terrorism and violent extremism. The 1999 Algiers Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism and its 2004 supplementary Protocol, as well as the 2002 Plan of Action on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism and the establishment of the African Centre for Study and Research on Terrorism, have provided a sound legal and institutional basis for enhanced cooperation among member States. From an operational perspective, steps have been taken to mobilize member States to fully and effectively implement the AU's normative counter-terrorism framework.

The African Union's commitment was further demonstrated by its holding in Nairobi on 2 September 2014 of a special summit of the Peace and Security Council dedicated to terrorism and violent extremism. At the Summit, the Peace and Security Council emphasized the need to address conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and violent extremism. It also stressed the importance of adopting comprehensive counter-terrorism strategies that empower civil society organizations, including religious leaders, women and vulnerable groups, and that cover not only security and law enforcement but also poverty eradication, job creation and development. Following the Summit, the AU Commission convened a forum in Addis Ababa that brought together the African regional groupings, relevant United Nations institutions and other international agencies with the goal of formulating a coordinated implementation plan.

Efforts to combat terrorism without acknowledging and addressing the drivers of violent extremism are likely to be counterproductive. Mindful of that fact, the AU is actively working with member States to develop sound national policies and programmes aimed at countering radicalization, delegitimizing the terrorist's narratives vis-à-vis young people, building young people's resilience in the face of violent extremism and renewing their confidence in their Governments' ability to respond to their needs. In that regard, the

initiatives the AU Commission has taken include the following measures.

First, it is developing and implementing programmes designed to counter radicalization and violent extremism in prisons and detention facilities, in order to rehabilitate disengaged fighters and support their reintegration into their communities. Initiatives in that regard are under way in Somalia and will be expanded to other countries in the future. Secondly, it is facilitating open discussions between State authorities and civil society, including religious authorities and women's organizations, in order to enable communities to air grievances and contribute actively to efforts to counter extremist ideologies. Thirdly, it is engaging the media in countering terrorist narratives and delegitimizing violent ideologies. The Network of African Journalists for Peace is now playing an important role in outreach efforts in that regard. Fourthly, the AU Commission is providing a platform for victims of terrorist acts to contribute to overall efforts to counter terrorism and violent extremism. In Algiers in October, the Commission organized the first AU symposium on the victims of terrorist acts, a very important part of our strategy. Fifthly, it is encouraging member States to ensure that their economic development and poverty alleviation policies and programmes are successfully implemented. As a follow-up to the Nairobi Summit, the AU Commission will work with the African Development Bank and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa to provide the necessary support to member States.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you once again, Mr. President, for giving us the opportunity to share our perspectives on this very important matter with Council members, and to reiterate the AU's determination to shoulder its share of responsibility in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism in all their forms and manifestations.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Okamura (Japan): At the outset, I would like to pay tribute to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II for his initiative in organizing this open debate. Its focus on the role of young people in countering violent extremism and promoting peace is timely and important. I would also like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his briefing.

When young people move, society changes. Their power is the driving force that pushes the world forward. That power can promote peace, freedom and democracy. Look at what happened in Tunisia. It was the country's youth who overturned the regime, bringing about a movement that has changed the whole face of the Middle East. But at the same time, youthful power can also lead the world to war and conflict. Young people can be exploited by political Powers and even support those who wish to disrupt society.

About four years ago, when Côte d'Ivoire was in the midst of a political crisis after the presidential elections of 2010, I was there as Japan's Ambassador. A man named Charles Blé Goudé encouraged young people to support the-then incumbent President Laurent Gbagbo. He manipulated various youth groups, whose demonstrations created fear among the people. They called for withdrawal of the United Nations presence and even attacked United Nations personnel and vehicles. Against such a backdrop, it is clear that we must try as hard as possible to direct young people's transformative and potentially explosive power towards peace, freedom and democracy rather than war and conflict. That lesson is all the more true today, when we are seeing so many young people being taken in by radical terrorist groups such as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant. We must take a close look at the frustrations and anger that young people are dealing with as a result of economic difficulties and social repression. We must turn their energy and passion into constructive actions, not destructive ones.

From that perspective, Japan considers the position of young people in the economic and social spheres to be directly connected to the issue of peace and stability. We have been working diligently to empower young people in order to engage them in development, economic growth and the promotion of business. A good example of that approach is our efforts conducted through the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) process, under which we have supported capacity-building for young Africans, and which I oversaw as Director-General for African Affairs at Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The most recent TICAD conference, TICAD V, held in 2013, saw the launch of several youth projects in that area. The projects include the African Business Education Initiative for Youth, which aims to invite 1,000 African youth participants to Japan over a period of five years to help them develop effective skills

and knowledge in various fields. The objective is to contribute to the development of industry throughout Africa. We have already received 155 participants from Africa in Japan. They are all expected to become brilliant leaders in business and to further strengthen the close relationship between Japan and Africa.

Another project launched at TICAD V was the establishment of human-resource development centres for business and industry at 10 locations, to serve 25 countries in Africa. These centres, along with other support programmes, are intended to build the capacity of some 30,000 young people.

As for the issue of violent extremism, I share the concern at the fact that the number of victims of violent extremism around the world is growing. Japan is not an exception. At the beginning of this year, two Japanese citizens were murdered in Syria. Immediately thereafter, Japan announced a policy of assistance to create societies resilient to radicalization. In essence, we hope to put into practice the Arab proverb that states, "the best way is to go in the middle". Under this policy, Japan is realizing various projects such as connecting youth with employment opportunities, correcting inequalities and supporting educational exchanges and exchanges of people.

Prime Minister Shinto Abe, on the occasion of his visit to Africa in January last year, stated, "If we can reveal a bright future to young people, the future of Africa will without a doubt also become bright". Here we could replace the word "Africa" with "the world". We have to reveal a bright future to all young people in order to make the future of the world bright.

Japan is determined to continue to work closely with its partners in the international community towards creating stable and energetic societies all over the world and giving hope to young people.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Colombia.

Ms. Mejía Vélez (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like at the outset, Mr. President, to extend my gratitude to His Royal Highness and to your country for having convened today's debate. This issue is of particular relevance against the backdrop of today's world and makes it very clear how closely linked emerging challenges to international peace and security are to the needs of one of the most vulnerable population groups, perhaps the most vulnerable population group, and also one that has the greatest potential for our future as humankind, that is, youth.

I should also like to thank the Secretary-General for the statement he made this morning, which also provides guidelines on how to address this terrible problem. I wish here to reiterate to what extent terrorism is a threat and wish to make it clear that no excuse, situation or condition can justify acts of terrorism.

At the same time, I would like to stress, as all of the members of the Security Council have done on numerous occasions, that any measures adopted to tackle the scourge of terrorism must be enacted with full respect for the rule of law and implemented in strict compliance with international human rights standards.

Violent extremism and radicalization constitute today one of the most pressing threats to peace, stability and development, as indicated in the excellent concept paper (S/2015/231, annex) circulated by Jordan, because it is this generation of young people, the largest such generation in history, that is the target of the strategies of terrorist organizations, which take advantage of their needs and their dissatisfaction to expand their networks of violence and further their criminal activities.

Colombia reiterates its willingness to work together with the rest of the international community on strategies aimed at preventing the involvement of young people in violent activities of any kind, as well as to engage in initiatives aimed at promoting the empowerment, education and participation of youth. It is vital that we take balanced measures that respond to all of the aspects of the complex phenomenon of violent extremist.

Nonetheless, it is also important to recognize that neither poverty nor underdevelopment is the cause per se of such phenomena, as some have said. As history has taught us, terrorism and extremism affect very diverse societies with disparate levels of development and varying social-inclusion conditions. For that reason, it is not just counterproductive but also mendacious to stereotype terrorism, radicalization and violent extremism among youth as being uniquely a problem of underdeveloped societies.

We therefore need to promote values such as solidarity, respect, tolerance, acceptance of diversity and respect for the rule of law, because an inclusive, open society that is able to meet to meet the aspirations of youth is vital not only to tackling the conditions

that promote radicalization and violent extremism, but also to ensuring that we can achieve our aspirations as democratic societies.

Including young people in the labour market is without a doubt one of the elements that is pivotal to the full development of their own aspirations as individuals. In 2013, the number of unemployed youth, according to the International Labour Organization, soared to 73 million. We cannot continue to make progress in the search for prevention mechanisms without addressing that reality. We cannot lose sight of the fact that both education and work are human rights and that closing the gender gap at all levels of education must be a priority in order to empower youth, improve their living conditions and free them from the adverse impact of violent extremism.

New technologies have proved to have negative effects that must be urgently addressed. Proponents of violence have been adept at identifying innovative ways of befriending and exploiting young people, and, as an international community, we have been lagging far behind in terms of finding an appropriate response to this phenomenon. As we seek solution strategies, it is vital that actions aimed at responding to this scourge be adopted with full respect for freedom of expression, religion and association, and the right to privacy. Censorship, therefore, is not the answer. Youth themselves need to take ownership of the discourse on democracy and diversity and they themselves must stand as critics of the manipulative attempts of those who advocate violence.

We in Colombia are, unfortunately, all too familiar with the effects that violence and terrorism can have on the lives of young people who, day by day, are seeking to forge the future of our country. For that reason, we are convinced of the need to grant the highest priority to creating living standards that will allow future generations to build fair and just societies and to live together in peace and freedom.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Ioannis Vrailas, Deputy Head of Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations.

Mr. Vrailas: Allow me to present apologies on behalf of Ambassador Mayr-Harting, as he is not able to deliver this statement himself.

I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States. The candidate countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania, the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

We thank the Jordanian presidency of the Security Council for the initiative to organize this high-level debate on the role of youth in countering violent extremism and promoting peace. It offers us the opportunity to further the discussions and to build on the recent commitments we took at the Summit on Countering Violent Extremism, convened by President Obama in February.

The fight against violent extremism will be lengthy. As we focus on immediate threats, we should also think strategically, to our future. Younger generations are the key to our success. Terrorist groups and extremists capitalize on advances in technology to find new ways of engaging with disaffected youth and take advantage of social networking sites, online video channels and radical chat rooms. They are spreading their propaganda more widely, more rapidly and more effectively, and youth are the main specific target through social media. That is why it is important that we act together and in a concerted manner, while upholding our core values.

The EU and its member States are very actively engaged in countering violent extremism and have identified anti-radicalization efforts as one of the main areas in which to concentrate our efforts. A particular emphasis is placed on prevention, and the EU has defined its vision through the EU Strategy for Combating Radicalization and Recruitment. We cannot afford to lose the fight for our youth. This is why education is so crucial. Let us not forget the words of a brave young woman, the Nobel Peace Prize laureate Malala Yousafzai: "The extremists are afraid of books and pens. The power of education frightens them".

In Europe, we believe that public education is a powerful tool to promote open-mindedness and tolerance in youth. We are also engaging with local communities, civil society and the private sector in order to foster their resilience and prevent the formation of parallel education networks, where extremist ideas may thrive. At the initiative of the French Government and the EU, the Union's Education Ministers met in Paris on 17 March to discuss new measures to tackle radicalization across the European Union.

In our partner countries, the EU also supports initiatives aimed at identifying the motivations behind youth extremism, at empowering women, at promoting community policing, at strengthening local actors and at improving the media and education capacities to counter radicalizing ideologies. We have to make sure that young people not only take advantage of education, but that they can find their place in their own societies, and an appropriate one. In that context, we also focus on addressing the underlying factors of radicalization by supporting initiatives with regard to youth, education, vocational training, job opportunities, civil society, security-sector reform and the role of women. That is very much in line with the link between security and development that the EU upholds, as is underlined in the presidency's concept note. There is indeed no security possible without the necessary development conditions, and in that sense supporting programmes that give opportunities to youth is a good way to counter extremism in an effective way. As already announced at the White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism in February, we will soon launch additional programmes on how to link education and counter violent extremism, address the socioeconomic aspects of conflicts and link them with the post-2015 agenda.

We therefore encourage States to engage with members of the relevant local communities and non-governmental actors in developing strategies to counter the violent extremist narrative that can incite youth to terrorist acts, and address the conditions that are conducive to the spread of violent extremism. Strategies include empowering youth and women, as well as religious, cultural and education leaders and all members of relevant civil-society groups, adopting tailored approaches to countering recruitment to this kind of violent extremism and promoting social inclusion and cohesion.

We are also constantly pleading with United Nations entities to focus on terrorism prevention in a more coordinated manner. The United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate have a crucial role to play in developing analyses and programmes that involve youth and are dedicated to youth for the purposes of effective countering-violent-extremism prevention. The Global Counter-Terrorism Forum is also an appropriate forum to develop such efforts further. We welcome the ongoing close cooperation between the Forum and the United Nations and encourage its further strengthening. Within their respective competences, regional organizations also have an important role to play, especially in the effective implementation of initiatives emanating from the United Nations.

The European Union will, therefore, continue to be very active and cooperate with all countries to counter violent extremism. The United Nations is a key forum for that endeavour, and we look forward to further constructive discussions during the General Assembly Ministerial week in September.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Ja'afari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): While we are meeting here, hundreds of youth are leaving their families surreptitiously, finding routes through open borders where they discover all the facilities needed to join terrorist networks, which are provided by specialized intelligence bodies. They often fail to break loose from the networks after they "awaken", which occurs too late, if it ever occurs at all. Our responsibilities as politicians, jurists, specialists, mothers and fathers require us to make every effort to address the underlying reasons why young people are joining terrorist organizations. Tackling that phenomenon is not new to our societies. The new factor is the unprecedented appeal of terrorist organizations, such as Daesh, the Al-Nusra Front, the Al-Shabaab movement, Boko Haram and others. They use instruments and tools of deception, especially media networks, provide money in order to galvanize unemployed youth and incite youth through religious fatwas.

Reports affirm that the majority of foreign terrorist fighters who join terrorist organizations, estimated in the tens of thousands, are in the 15-35 age group. The new media technologies have allowed us to empathize with the sufferings of many families who were bereft of their dear ones. The young people they have lost decided, in an impulsive moment, to join organizations that instilled them with the notion that they will be performing their sacred duty or performing a heroic or novel moral act. Some organizations have even offered them easy money.

Addressing this phenomenon means that we also have to deal with its underlying reasons. In that respect, my delegation wishes to affirm that the flagrant interference of certain States in the internal affairs of other States — under pretexts like the

spread of democracy and freedom, the protection of civilians, and jihad, which lead to the prolongation of conflicts, and prevent us from settling them peacefully. Such pretexts serve to create justifications for direct or indirect foreign interference in the affairs of other Member States. They, in fact, are among the most important drivers of radicalization, hatred, violence and extremism. The same applies to certain regimes that spread a discourse of hatred and radicalization, or use educational curricula that have nothing to do with true religions or humanitarian principles and that incite people to barbarism, violence and terrorism. That does not mean that we have to disregard the other important motivating factors, which include, but are not limited to, discrimination based on religion, citizenship, nationality, ethnicity, colour, gender or other factors that constitute collective punishment against persons who never opted for a "bad" place and did not choose their religion or their skin colour.

Regrettably, various impulsive campaigns have taken place that seek to stereotype the followers of a certain religion and attempt to brand them as terrorists. They have included various acts of discrimination, marginalization and oppression, as well as security crackdowns in States that claim to uphold humanitarian values, citizenship and human rights. More regrettably still, certain Islamic countries abuse anything Arab or Muslim.

We are asked to work arduously and effectively to protect young people, males and females, from the campaigns running on social networking sites and TV channels. These are campaigns that lure them into leaving their families and homelands, espousing fundamentalist takfiri and wahhabi ideologies, and joining terrorist organizations abroad, where they commit acts of murder and sabotage until they are themselves killed in battle or suicide attacks. Furthermore, when they return to their own countries, they are called upon to create cells in order to carry out attacks. We know which parties help and finance them and facilitate their travel. Those parties call themselves moderate and yet they train and arm young people to fight in Afghanistan, Somalia, Chechnya, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon, Nigeria, Kenya and other countries. The perpetrators here are not unknown. They are the Governments of certain known States, some of which are, unfortunately, represented in the Council.

We should not leave young people with despair as their only option as they try to decide between becoming victims of the sponsors of terrorism or drowning in the Mediterranean Sea en route to an imagined paradise. That represents a major shortcoming in international policy, for which young people are paying a dear price. In our countries, millions of young men and women are at risk — through social media and other online platforms — of becoming the tools of terrorism. Why do we not enlist them as agents in the fight against terrorism and as soldiers of tolerance? Do we not have the means to do so?

As a matter of fact, we already have appropriate instruments in place, most notably the Security Council's resolutions on counter-terrorism, the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, and the General Assembly's resolutions on the Alliance of Civilizations and the culture of peace, which seek to counter discrimination, intolerance and incitement to terrorism. What we really need is a strong resolve to counter terrorism and to hold its sponsors accountable in order to spare humanity from this scourge and arrive at the maintenance of international peace security, the title of our meeting today.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Hungary.

Ms. Bogyay (Hungary): I am speaking here today not only as the Permanent Representative of Hungary, but also as the mother of a young man. I truly believe that we should teach our children the concept and understanding of diversity. We should teach them to celebrate diversity. Rather than see it as a burden, they should see it as a source of inspiration. If we are successful in that pursuit, our children will feel safer in their own bodies.

Instead of that, what is happening today? Let me start with the pressing issue of losing or not finding one's identity and looking for one, and then I shall continue with the basic human aspiration of belonging to some place and to someone, as well as the need for recognition and the wish to be talked about, without regard to good or bad motivations. All of this is taking place in a time of uncertainty in both a chaotic world and a chaotic order.

Culture is the foundation on which peoples' identities grow and mature. It is my deeply held belief that many of today's problems are rooted in a crisis of identity, which has today become a global

issue. The increasing mobility of young people and ideas across international borders, the information and communication revolutions, and economic globalization have made identities broader, delocalized and multilayered. Under the rapid transformation of cultural and social structures, the fear of the unknown and the lack of understanding of differing views often provide fertile ground for racism, xenophobia and intolerance, human rights violations and, of course, outright conflict. Fully appreciating one's own cultural background is possible only after understanding and respecting the diversity of other cultures and celebrating the richness of our common cultural heritage. In other words, we need to learn from and about each other.

Accordingly, I would like to address this very issue of the power of learning. Such ideals and values as compassion, hospitality, fraternity and solidarity are, to a large extent, learned through education and life experience. Peaceful transformation begins within one's self and involves learning about the self and others. Transformations start from and within an individual. An avalanche of incredible force accumulates from the movements of particular snowflakes on a mountain top. Powerful ideas are generated in the minds of individuals and spread with the lightning speed of modern information technologies to transform societies in most fundamental ways.

I wish to thank Jordan and Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II for initiating today's open debate on the role of youth in countering violent extremism. Hungary, of course, fully aligns itself with the statement made by observer of the European Union.

We fully agree that, in order to effectively counter the threat of radicalization, we must tackle the socioeconomic root causes that often leave young people marginalized and susceptible to violent extremists. High levels of youth unemployment, illiteracy and weak family bonds all contribute to creating a fertile ground for radicalization. We also believe that education should be accessible to every child and be directed towards the development of respect for the child's parents and his or her own cultural identity, language and values, and prepare the child for a responsible life in a free society.

It is my belief that strong and harmonious families contribute to the development of strong identities and cultural values that will make children and young people more resilient in the face of extremism. In the same vein, promoting sports, art and cultural activities for youth is also important for developing culturally sensitive and responsible young adults. We believe that Governments should also facilitate the participation of young people in public life and public discourse. I cannot express strongly enough the responsibility and role of the media in creating dreams and setting examples — negative or positive. Young people are not only the targets of violent extremist groups; they may also have a role to play in using the media, for instance by engaging in journalism, to counter such ideologies and promote tolerance, diversity and respect towards each other.

Let me conclude my statement by underlining the importance of criminal accountability in ensuring justice for the victims and — in the long term — in healing the wounds of traumatized societies.

In recent months we have heard a lot about the barbaric crimes committed by terrorist organizations. Although today we are discussing the important role of youth in countering violent extremism, we must not forget about the young victims, who deserve justice. Hungary is of the view that there can be no peace and reconciliation without accountability. Therefore, we must redouble our efforts to find a solution that would also honour the victims.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Belgium.

Mr. Buffin (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Belgium would like to thank the Jordanian presidency for having organized this debate on a major challenge at the beginning of this new century. My statement is meant to complement the one delivered by the European Union (EU), which we, of course, endorse.

We cannot deny that in recent years we have seen an alarming increase in radicalization and violent extremism involving a great many young people from around the world. The Middle East is probably the region that suffers most from that trend, but many other regions of the world are also affected to varying degrees. Europe is no exception, and neither is Belgium. My country was directly affected by the deadly attack almost a year ago, on 24 May 2014, against the Jewish Museum in Brussels, which was likely perpetrated by a young fighter returning from the Middle East.

We must of course ensure the safety of our citizens against the risks posed by this phenomenon, but we must also ask ourselves what the causes and remedies are, and ensure that the latter are consistent with the values that we defend. Why do some young people

choose to kill innocent people rather than go to school and acquire the tools necessary to become responsible adults who are useful to the society and community to which they belong? While the elements of the analysis of the causes of the phenomenon are well known, the remedies are complex and multifaceted, and need to be fine-tuned. Time is also required for them to take effect. In that regard, I would like to highlight three courses of action that I consider crucial in the fight against this phenomenon.

First, there is a need to link the actions at the various levels of power, from the global to the most local, while taking into account the value added and the competencies of each of those levels. Although we must define the major political outlines and acquire the means at the international, regional and national levels to fight this scourge, concrete implementation will primarily take place in cities and neighbourhoods. It is an illusion to think that we can reach the young people concerned, who have often withdrawn from both school and society, without reaching out to them where they live, where their frustrations and failures have taken root and which is the breeding ground for their potential radicalization. That requires human and financial resources, as well as genuine political will. Schools, neighbourhood leaders, social services, families — where women often play a major role — local religious leaders and civil-society associations will be among our best allies. We need to strengthen their ability to act, including by training them to produce a counter-discourse that can really be heard. Ultimately, such policies should have the result of enabling young people to become the main vectors for solutions and to defend themselves and the values of tolerance and respect for others.

Secondly, we need to provide our youth with a future. Socio-professional insertion, particularly for the most disadvantaged, should be a priority of all our Governments. According to the International Labour Organization, 73 million young people worldwide are currently unemployed. The lack of employment and income prevents them from projecting themselves into their future and building a decent adult life. That lack of prospects makes them easy prey for all types of extremists. That issue should be at the core of negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda.

Thirdly and finally, we need to better understand how the channels of communication used by violent extremists function. Social media and the Internet are undeniably vectors for radicalization. As was pointed out last February during the White House summit on countering violent extremism, in Washington, D.C., it is necessary to strengthen cooperation between actors from all key sectors, including the private sector, while respecting the fundamental principle of the freedom of expression. The Internet has a powerful grip; however, it is not in itself sufficient to radicalize youth in a lasting way. Contact between these young people and local extremist and jihadist networks and cells is the second stage, which draws them more lastingly into those destructive movements. We must fight against them with strength and determination.

Allow me to conclude my statement by shedding light on what Belgium has or intends to do in order to combat violent extremism. Our actions could serve as experience to be shared within the framework of the necessary exercise of the exchange of good practices between all the relevant stakeholders. The Belgian federal authorities have adopted a programme to prevent violent radicalization, with the goal, in particular, of better identifying the processes of radicalization through research projects and incorporating that information into new initiatives that have been or will be further developed in terms of prevention. A pilot project was launched in 2014 in nearly a dozen of the cities most affected by this phenomenon so as to provide better support to local authorities and enable them to combat the phenomenon of violent radicalization. Concerning prisons, the Minister of Justice has just launched an action plan against radicalization, which aims, first, to prevent inmates from becoming radicalized while in prison, and, secondly, to develop a specialized coaching programme for those radicalized during their detention. Other levels of Government in Belgium have also launched their own projects, and all of them pay particular attention to the training of those on the front line, including teachers, educators and social workers. Tools have also been developed to train young people themselves and their parents so as to better anchor the moral and civic values of our societies in education and better equip young people against the dangers of ideological indoctrination.

At the request of EU member States and in cooperation with the United Kingdom, Belgium has taken the lead of the Syria Strategic Communications Advisory Team programme, which aims to develop a media strategy to counter the message of hatred sent out by jihadist preachers.

I also wish to recall that Belgium, as part of its chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, will organize on 8 May a conference on the theme "Tolerance is stronger than hatred," thereby showing the extent to which the diversity of our societies is an asset, rather than a risk. It aims to identify concrete recommendations, with particular attention to three areas that may play an important role in promoting our ability to live together: formal and informal education, the media, and the worlds of work and social relationships. At the ministerial meeting of 19 May, during which the Belgian chairmanship will end, member States will adopt a new protocol to the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism, focused on the fight against the phenomenon of foreign fighters. An action plan against the radicalization and extremism that may lead to terrorism will also be adopted on that occasion.

Based on our previous initiatives, including the Washington, D.C., Summit organized by President Obama last February, we encourage Member States to strengthen their cooperation so as to address the phenomenon of foreign fighters, ensure the safety of our citizens, address the root causes allowing terrorism to thrive, and deal with recruitment. In that regard, we welcome the high-level meeting scheduled for September, which will give us an opportunity to take stock of the implementation of the action plan against extremism developed during the recent Summit in Washington, D.C.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Australia.

Ms. Bird (Australia): I thank the President for Jordan's ongoing contribution to this very important agenda item, going back to the Amman message during World Interfaith Harmony Week.

Along with many Member States, Australia is facing unprecedented numbers of youth travelling to fight for Daesh, Al-Qaida, Al-Shabaab and other terrorist groups. No community or social group is immune to terrorist recruitment. One of the teenagers intercepted by police at Sydney airport last month on his way to join a terrorist group was affluent, a high academic achiever and a member of the debating and football teams.

Australia has strengthened laws and boosted resources to prevent terrorist recruitment. The Foreign Minister has cancelled over 100 passports to prevent travel. Counter-terrorism units in our airports have intercepted teenagers as young as 16 attempting to join Daesh's ranks. But measures to strengthen security and law enforcement alone are not the solution. Additional action is needed as part of a multidimensional strategy. As others have said here today, that includes looking at whether we are sufficiently addressing the root causes of violent extremism and fostering peaceful and cohesive societies. Our strategies for countering terrorism and supporting peace need to place youth at the centre. Young people can be more vulnerable to outside influences and are often seeking a sense of purpose and belonging. Some have less ability to rebut or contest radical or extremist ideas. That is why young people are often the number one target of terrorist groups.

Take the example of the 18-year old Australian who is reported to have killed 17 people in a suicide attack in Ramadi last month. He has been described as a shy and impressionable boy who grew up an atheist in Melbourne. We have heard other similarly tragic stories today. One of the biggest challenges we face in countering extremist and radical ideas is the exposure of young people to online propaganda. But simply deleting all such material from the Internet is both impossible and ineffective. We also need to involve young people in the solutions. Young people themselves are best placed to deliver positive messages to contest extremist views. That is why in Australia, for example, we are empowering youth to engage in constructive debates through an online magazine called *The Point*, written by young Australians for young Australians.

Despite the online threat, in most cases youth are recruited through local networks, so it is also important to focus attention at the community level. Strong communities are often well placed to intervene against attempts towards radicalization and build a sense of inclusion. Assistance in that area could include empowering youth and non-governmental organizations to run leadership and mentoring programmes and to support youth participation in the arts and sport in order to enhance equity and inclusion.

We need to continue sharing approaches that work best, in particular those that effectively target and engage youth. The Global Counter-Terrorism Forum's good practices are a useful inspiration for all Member States. The Security Council and all States must remain proactive in using United Nations sanctions to target those individuals recruiting youth for terrorism.

We also need to move beyond supporting better coordination among the United Nations counter-terrorism entities to ensure that all the relevant programmes of the United Nations take account of the roles of youth in countering violent extremism. We hope that the United Nations plan of action will provide the framework to guide that.

Today's debate takes us a step closer to placing youth at the centre of terrorism prevention. We also need to make the most of upcoming opportunities to advance this agenda at the United Nations if we are to overcome that threat.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Thailand.

Mr. Plasai (Thailand) (*spoke in French*): Today, peace and security are seriously threatened by terrorism and violent extremism, which are exacerbating conflicts in many countries around the world. Even more alarmingly, a large number of our young people have been affected by such hateful activities or have been involved in them. The world's 1.8 billion young people represent one quarter of the global population. They hold the key to our future. They could be the catalysts for peace, development, prosperity and progress. Accordingly, as an essential element of our strategy and efforts to combat terrorism and violent extremism, we must take into account and examine the specific situation of youth and the potential role of young people for promoting peace. We therefore welcome the timely initiative of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in convening today's open debate. In that regard, I would like to express the gratitude of the Kingdom of Thailand to His Royal Highness Prince Al Hussein bin Abdallah II of Jordan for presiding over this meeting. I also thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Peter Neumann and Mr. Scott Atrain for sharing their points of view on the problem.

(*spoke in English*)

In order to effectively protect our youth from violence and enhance their role in countering violent extremism, the international community must adopt a comprehensive approach that addresses the root causes of the problem. Allow me to share with the Council some perspectives as to how we can support our youth in that regard.

First, we must cultivate an environment of tolerance for cultural diversity and respect for the freedoms of belief, thought and expression. At the national level, Governments, academia, civil society and the media all have a role to play in fostering a peaceful and inclusive society through interfaith dialogue. That can be complemented by efforts at the international level, such as the commendable work of the United Nations Alliance of Civilization and the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace.

Secondly, quality education should be universally accessible. Priority should be given to efforts to enhance access for vulnerable groups such as children of migrant workers or those living in remote areas.

Thirdly, decent employment must be ensured for youth, so as to give them a sense of purpose and belonging. National Governments have an important role to play, particularly in matching skills with jobs, promoting gender equality and ensuring an appropriate legal environment to protect youth in the labour market.

Fourthly, youth are sensitive to romantic and heroic ideas. They are therefore highly vulnerable to the propaganda of terrorist and violent extremist groups. Education and employment provide, to a certain extent, a defence against youth recruitment and association with radical groups. However, they may not be sufficient in today's increasingly borderless world. Governments must therefore focus on monitoring and countering propaganda and recruitment techniques of terrorist and violent extremist groups, especially those made online. It goes without saying that there should a balance between those efforts and the fundamental principle of respect for privacy and the freedom of expression.

Fifthly, of equal importance is the issue of the rehabilitation and reintegration of youth who return home after joining terrorist and violent extremist groups. Should they be treated as terrorists or healed as youth with shattered dreams? Should they be severely punished or given another chance? That issue should be further discussed and adequately addressed.

Last but not least, regional and global international organizations can play an important part in efforts to effectively harness the role of youth in countering terrorism and violent extremism and promoting peace. The Kingdom of Thailand supports the efforts of the Security Council in that regard, in particular resolution 2178 (2014), which encourages the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team to ensure coordination among all United Nations counter-terrorism bodies. We also urge greater coordination among the relevant

United Nations offices and agencies, in particular the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, the United Nations Development Programme and UNESCO, in their efforts to protect our youth from violence and enhance their role in promoting peace.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Mr. Thorns (Germany): Germany fully aligns itself with the statement by the Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations. In addition, allow me to add some remarks in my national capacity.

We are grateful for this timely debate and the valuable initiative of the Jordanian presidency.

The United Nations system as a whole has an important role to play in countering violent extremism and addressing its root causes.

By fighting poverty and educating young people, the United Nations development organizations address the root causes of radicalization. The Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and the United Nations Centre for Counter-Terrorism play an important role in developing concrete counter-terrorism strategies. UN-Women empowers young women and mothers to stand up to extremism in their families and their environment. We feel, however, that more work needs to be done to broaden the range of actors and to further mainstream the fight against violent extremism into the whole United Nations family.

Our response to violent extremism needs to be multifaceted. Robust military engagement, sanctions and criminal prosecution are only one part of the solution. If we want to stop recruitment and lead young people back into our societies, prevention measures and de-radicalization are of even greater importance.

Both of those aspects are crucial pillars of Germany's counter-terrorism response. At the national level, our Government works hand in hand with civil society, religious institutions and non-governmental organizations. One example of that comprehensive approach is the programme Live Democracy, which sets up regional prevention networks, gives advice to former members of radical communities and funds civil society institutions that are active in the fight against extremism. Those institutions encourage young people to stand up against extremist ideas and to assist affected peers.

At the international level, cooperation remains crucial. Together with its partners, Germany continues to counter the enabling structural conditions worldwide. Our various initiatives in Africa and the Middle East aim to create favourable socioeconomic conditions and to mitigate factors that could lead to radicalization. Youth employment, the social integration of refugees and migrants, as well as mass educational programmes are only some of the focus areas. A few examples of these initiatives include our support for partner organizations in Egypt to assist young people in finding a job, our organization of education and after-school activities for refugee children and youth in northern Iraq and our support for youth groups and facilities, as well as schools and professional training institutions in Mali.

Debating the important connection between youth and their role in violent extremism is a good first step in analysing where we stand and what is already being done by different actors. However, now it is time to act to ensure that the youth of today will not become the terrorists of tomorrow. We need to work together to bring endangered youth back into their families and communities. And we need to disarm, de-radicalize and reintegrate those young men and women who have been seduced by extremist groups and terrorists.

Integrating youth into our collective efforts to counter violent extremism will be the best way of building our society and promoting peace as a whole.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Luxembourg.

Ms. Lucas (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to thank Jordan for having taken the initiative of convening this open debate under the presidency of His Majesty Crown King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein. The Secretary-General, Mr. Peter Neumann and Mr. Scott Atran illustrated the importance of this debate by identifying the role of youth in the fight against violent extremism and promoting peace. We welcome the fact that the Security Council has given this issue the attention it deserves.

Luxembourg fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union. I will make a few comments in my national capacity.

First, as our Prime Minister said at the Security Council meeting (see S/PV.7272) devoted to the fight against foreign terrorist fighters, in September 2014, we must intensify our efforts to prevent radicalization,

which could lead young people to terrorism, and to counter violent extremism. In Europe, the European Commission has put in place a radicalization awareness network that works at the local community level. In its capacity as President of the Council of the European Union, which it will exercise in the second half of 2015, Luxembourg will ensure the follow-up to the implementation of the European Union strategy aimed at fighting radicalization and the recruitment of terrorists.

At the national level, our relevant agencies are implementing a strategy for the prevention of extremist radicalization. A mentoring and awareness-raising network has been established in close collaboration with the educational and penitentiary structures of our country, religious communities and with the full support of the Red Cross Society.

The concept paper (S/2015/231, annex) circulated by the Jordanian presidency ahead of this debate properly identifies the main root causes that lead to youth radicalization. Young people seeking a sense of identity and of belonging to a social group are particularly vulnerable to the phenomenon. The feeling of exclusion as a precondition for radicalization has been eloquently described this morning by Mr. Neumann and is clear in the number of young people who leave Europe to fight alongside Daesh other extremist terrorist organizations.

To counter the rise of violent extremism and prevent the exploitation of young people, it is essential, in our view, to invest in the development and well-being of youth themselves. For although we must avoid oversimplifying reality, the lack of prospects and economic opportunities, including the lack of access to employment that young people are faced with, undeniably contribute to creating a breeding ground for the radicalization of young people. The link between violent extremism and economic and social problems goes back to the broader link that exists between security, development and the respect for the rule of law and human rights.

As the Secretary-General underscored this morning, we must avoid reducing youth to a simple potential security risk. On the contrary, we must acknowledge them as agents of change and as actors in building peace and development. We must give young people the opportunity to show their potential by promoting their full participation in the life of society.

It is in this spirit that Luxembourg is committed, at the level of the Peacebuilding Commission, to supporting the Guinean authorities in their policy aimed at promoting employment and the socioeconomic reintegration Organizationf young people and at building an inclusive society. Our development cooperation policy has a special focus on education and vocational training for young people. It is in this sense as well that Luxembourg has been working, together with Bulgaria and Panama and the Group of Friends for Children and the Sustainable Development Goals, with the support of UNICEF, to ensure that the post-2015 development agenda fully takes into account the specific needs and potential of children and young people in general.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Maldives.

Mr. Sareer (Maldives): On behalf of the Maldives delegation, I would like to express our sincere appreciation to Jordan, as President of the Council, for taking the initiative to convene this open debate on an important topic. We also thank the Secretary-General for his engagement in this debate. We have read with much interest the concept paper (S/2015/231, annex) circulated by the Kingdom of Jordan and we welcome the call for a more in-depth analysis of this issue by the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate.

When we speak of violent extremism, terrorism and conflict, it is sad to note that young people are always somewhere in the picture. We catch horrifying glimpses in the news of children as victims of violence — a massacre at a school last year in Peshawar, Pakistan; hundreds of children kidnapped by Boko Haram in Nigeria; an attack on a school bus in Yemen; the killing of teenagers in the West Bank; and the bombing of a soccer game in Baghdad. As a Pakistani official poignantly put it, "the smaller the coffin, the heavier it is to carry".

As the scourge of terrorism sweeps the world, it robs innocent children of their childhood, their parents, their sisters and brothers, and sometimes even their short-lived lives well before their time. Around the world, children are losing the sacred sense of safety to walk the streets, go to school and pursue their dreams. It affects us all: acts of terror disrupt international peace and security and undermine the inalienable rights of children.

My delegation joins others in condemning terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Terrorism and other forms of violent extremism cannot be justified by any means. It should not be associated with any religion, race, faith, theology, values, culture, society or group, nor can it be localized to one nation. The Government of Maldives denounces the acts of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham terrorist organization, which are fuelling narratives of violence and promoting radicalism among young people. We condemn in the strongest term the acts of this un-Islamic and anti-Islamic group and its recruitment of young people to engage in conflict and commit grave violations against innocent people.

We will not let Islam, a religion of peace and compassion, be hijacked by radical and extremist elements to perpetuate hatred and violence. Nor will we let these extremists spread ignorance, preach hate and corrupt our youth. The Maldives has always called for inculcating the true values of Islam — mutual understanding, respect, tolerance and dialogue — in our society. In particular, the Maldives has urged the spread of good social and Islamic values and principles among young people.

More than 25 years since the Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the General Assembly, it is shocking to hear of the continuing role of young people in violent extremism. We the nations of the world promised a better life for children when we signed that landmark Convention. We cannot let them down.

Even more shocking than the victimization of children is the radicalization of young people. Young people, especially those searching for a sense of belonging, purpose or identity, are highly vulnerable to manipulation by those with violent agendas or ideologies, who radicalize young minds, recruit them to a cause, and mobilize them as child soldiers, terrorist fighters or accessories to violent crimes. The Maldives, as a party to the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, strongly opposes the recruitment of children in armed conflict, and urges States to take all necessary measures to prevent children meeting with such a fate.

The Government of Maldives is committed to paving the way for youth to be more involved in the building of the nation and to create socioeconomic opportunities for them. We are committed to empowering our youth and implementing better programmes and mechanisms to protect them.

To bring our young people back from the front lines to classrooms, we need a long-term game plan. A critical part of the solution is, first, to invest in education. Education is a powerful tool in empowering young people to take control of their own futures. Secondly, we need to create opportunities for young people to find meaning and purpose in other pursuits — for example, through youth skills training and vocational programmes. Thirdly, we need to build strong, supportive communities for our young people to grow up in. Our children learn from us adults; we need to set a positive example for them to follow.

We have been listening intently and taken note of the initiatives on involving youth in peacebuilding that we have heard about today from Member States. However, as we discuss solutions, let us not forget to engage young people themselves. We need to harness their limitless imaginations, optimism, energy and hope. What can children and youth teach us about bringing peace to the world?

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Switzerland.

Mr. Sollberger (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Jordan for having organized this debate. The rise of radicalization and violent extremism, especially among adolescent and young people, is among the today's most pressing threats to peace, stability and development.

Switzerland is firmly committed to countering violent extremism. This is a security imperative that calls for a preventative approach and a broad-based societal response. We must listen to the grievances of those vulnerable to radicalization and recruitment by terrorist groups, especially young people. We have to offer a choice to these young people attracted to radicalization — a sense of belonging and a purpose in life, as the two professors who briefed the Council at the opening of this debate pointed out.

It is for this reason that Switzerland supports the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund. This innovative public-private partnership based in Geneva offers great opportunities to channel efforts and collectively implement a long-term strategy aimed at preventing the radicalization of young men and women. We are ready to actively support the its campaign to raise awareness among the private sector regarding the need for joint action to create jobs for young people.

Let me explain how Switzerland is integrating preventative measures to fight violent extremism in its domestic as well as in its foreign policies. Domestically, Switzerland's bottom-up design actions seek to empower local communities — to people themselves — the means to act. Swiss communal and regional authorities and a multitude of civil society actors, including religious organizations, play an active role in promoting a welcoming socioeconomic environment. Private-sector companies offer jobs and vocational training. Paid training offers significant advantages: as employees, apprentices obtain a recognized status that builds their confidence.

This bottom-up approach also informs Switzerland's foreign policy approach, which includes a wide range of relevant development and peacebuilding measures aiming to make societies more resilient, for example through youth employment in Kyrgyzstan, demobilizing child soldiers in Myanmar and vocational training in Tunisia.

Let me conclude by addressing two particular issues regarding the link between violent extremism and youth. Switzerland has already expressed many times its concern about counter-terrorism measures that criminalize any humanitarian action or any contact established for humanitarian ends with armed groups considered to be extremists. It is the children in areas controlled by such groups who are most affected and directly suffer from the harmful consequences of these measures. Counter-terrorism policies that often seek to protect the most vulnerable should take such consequences into consideration.

Finally, the enactment of counter-terrorism legislation does not give sufficient consideration to the fact that persons alleged of committing terrorism could be under the age of 18. Many counter-terrorism strategies, for example, provide for long sentences of incarceration and solitary confinement, which not only violates the rights of individuals to a fair trial but also has a devastating psychological impact on children. Criminal legislation for countering terrorism should therefore be considered in the light of the specific situation of children so as to integrate international standards for juvenile justice.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Qatar.

Ms. Al-Thani (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): It was a great pleasure for us to see His Highness Crown Prince Al-Hussein bin Abdullah preside over this extremely important meeting. There can be no doubt the fact that he was keen to attend this debate underscores the vital nature of this issue and how important it is to reach practical recommendations to help facing the challenges hampering youth empowerment and to strengthen their role in building peace. Allow me also me to congratulate Jordan on its great efforts during its presidency of the Security Council this month.

The international community has been unanimous in all of its resolutions: it is determined to fight terrorism and extremism. All Member States agreed under the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy that dealing with the root causes of terrorism is the only way to eradicate it. Therefore, in the light of that international consensus, to achieve that objective will require a longer-term, far-reaching strategy that takes into account the factors leading to terrorism. Indeed, confronting this scourge, which threatens our communities and undermines stability and unity, is a shared responsibility.

Experience has confirmed that terrorism did not arise in a vacuum, but grew and developed in fragile environments where extremism also thrived as a result of policies that do not take into account the problems of communities, including issues related to young people. The state of despair experienced by youth is one of the most important factors being exploited by terrorist organizations as they pursue their evil ends. These groups use this despair as the fuel for their recruitment of young people. Responding to the aspirations of young people, creating educational programmes that would enable them to contribute to the development of their communities, and addressing unemployment and social justice with a view to eliminating the sense of insecurity and unfairness and enabling them to participate in decision-making is the only sure way to eradicate extremism and refute the arguments put forward by terrorists.

The impact of extremism on young people — and the severity of the consequences at the national and international levels should the appropriate steps to address this issue with the requisite urgency not be taken — require us to consider all the reasons that have led young people to be attracted to terrorism and violence. The international community has a joint responsibility in this respect. In the light of the various dimensions of this problem, addressing the question of extremism through the fight against terrorism alone

would be a mistake. Rather, we must take a holistic view and consider the causes of extremism and why young people sometimes join terrorist organizations and see violence as a way of expressing their positions.

When we call for a comprehensive approach to rooting out extremism and terrorism, we do not mean to diminish the importance of the immediate military response to the imminent threat posed by terrorist groups that recruit young people. In that regard, we stress the importance of addressing the root causes of extremism and terrorism and, in the context of finding comprehensive solutions, of changing circumstances and motivations in order to improve the prospects for a better future for communities and particularly for young people.

Attending to the needs of our youth and supporting their aspirations for the future are important components of the State of Qatar's policies at the national and international levels, conscious as we are of the terrible consequences if the ongoing conflicts in many countries in our region, particularly in Palestine and Syria, were to reach them. These conflicts have festered because the international community has not been able to reach solutions pursuant to decisions of international legitimacy and the provisions of international law.

Syrian children constitute more than half the number of Syrian refugees and displaced persons, which has led to some 2 million Syrian children being deprived of educational opportunities. That means that Syria is in danger of losing an entire generation. Further, if Syrian children are deprived of the right to education, they will be vulnerable to recruitment by extremist groups. For that reason, the State of Qatar announced at the recent donor conference held in Kuwait the establishment of a fund for education and skills training for Syrian refugees and displaced persons.

In recognition of the role of youth in addressing the world's challenges, my country took the initiative to hold the Youth Forum on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice from 7 to 9 April, on the eve of the thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, recently held in Doha, with a view to enabling young people to express their opinions and participate in the drafting of resolutions and policies on crime in its various forms and in the fight against terrorism.

Finally, young people have always been the real engine of change. Failure to recognize their role would be tantamount to ignoring logic and the lessons of history. Therefore, unless we provide an environment in which youth are engaged and involved in all aspects of community life, the price to be paid will be very high and have a negative impact on international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Costa Rica.

Mr. Mendoza-García (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the Jordanian delegation for having organized such an important debate. We are participating here today firmly convinced of the key role that youth have to play in the attainment of democracy and the promotion of peace.

The world continues to view with alarm the serious threat posed by terrorism and violent extremism to international peace and security, the enjoyment of human rights, the social and economic development of States, global stability and prosperity, and of course the creation of opportunities for the development of young people. As was reiterated at the recent Ibero-American Summit of December 2014, the young people of today are the best educated and skilled generation in history, yet they face many challenges in such areas as employment, health, mobility and participation, with none as cross-cutting as education, the development of knowledge and innovation. We therefore have to grapple with two realities: first, the growth of the youth population, particularly young people of working age, which serves as the economic and demographic engine of our region within the current global context; and secondly, the development of technology, particularly information and communications technology.

Costa Rica is honoured to have organized, together with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the World Youth Summit, held in San José in August 2013, which, in its outcome document, emphasized the fact that young people are genuinely transforming today's world and shaping themselves as a force for progress. The Summit also shed light on the need to improve democracy as an essential mechanism for guaranteeing the full participation of young people in decision-making processes and on the need to take action that would nurture their empowerment at regional, national and international levels. It is therefore urgent that we focus on fostering and enabling genuine, free and fair access to knowledge about information and communications technology. This will ensure that young people can simultaneously benefit from and act

as champions of social progress, a process in which they will not simply play the role of spectator, but in which they can also act as producers of content with social, political and cultural depth and impact.

The President of the Republic of Costa Rica, Mr. Luis Guillermo Solís Rivera, has upheld an ongoing commitment to youth, involving young people directly in the decision-making process at the highest levels and ensuring their full participation in Government and political posts that are key to the holistic development of society. Given his actions, the Secretary-General of the ITU has extended the courtesy to our President of appointing him Patron of Youth and Information Technology, an appointment that will be made official in June of this year. The purpose of this designation is to encourage the international community, the private sector, organized civil society and the teaching profession to deliver skills development and access to information and communications technology to young people, without regard to their social reality or environment. In this regard, Costa Rica has already been acknowledged for its tireless participation and involvement in issues relating to cybersecurity and the protection of childhood in the digital age, achieving important and innovative change in our domestic legislation with the overall aim of protecting childhood and youth.

Despite the educational and socioeconomic disadvantages facing many thousands of young people around the world, they nonetheless represent the sector of society that has made the most progress in areas that will be fundamental to the delivery of change, such as access to and the sophisticated use of information communications technology in the digital age. Nevertheless, the inclusion or exclusion of young people cannot be attributed simply to the so-called digital divide, given that the use of the Internet and wireless telecommunications networks is no guarantee of their genuine and authentic inclusion in digital society or in the main power networks that forge our common identities and values. In this regard, fostering the ability to generate content for young people is key if we are to open the way to new options for them to engage in social, economic, environmental, political and cultural participation.

Information and communications technology is a key instrument in educational processes and a fundamental part of the way education is delivered today as a practical tool that allows young people to be more equitably involved in the process of sustainable development, escape poverty and contribute to society, genuine development, and the maintenance and promotion of peace. In that regard, education is undoubtedly the most valuable investment in the development and harmony of individuals and societies, which Governments should promote, encourage and guarantee as a right to ensure social mobility and full access to the exercise of other rights and in building a culture of peace.

Costa Rica remains proud of its decision to abolish the army in 1948. That decision is fundamentally important to our country, having freed greater resources to be allocated to education and the social security system. It is the basis for enhancing and pursuing, to this day, the building of a knowledge-based society where young people, through information and communications technologies, have become increasingly involved in social power networks and able to make more informed decisions in forging of common values and identities.

The full inclusion of young people in spaces of genuine power is crucial in generating intergenerational agreements that will allow our societies to adopt new attitudes and points of view and to create new avenues for peaceful coexistence among peoples and new forms of dialogue and understanding that will enable us to acknowledge one another and act as citizens of the world that we desire to build and to preserve peace.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco.

Mr. Hilale (Morocco) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I wish to thank His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II for his statement at the opening of this meeting on the role of youth in countering violent extremism and promoting peace.

The young people of today also make up the future generation. If they are healthy, the entire generation and society will be healthy. It is unfortunate that many young people in many countries are being influenced and recruited by violent groups, for example in Somalia and elsewhere. Who is responsible for that? Who is responsible for violent extremism, which is the main obstacle to global peace and security? We must all stand against that threat. We must not forget that young people are being targeted by such terrorist groups via all means, including financial, advanced technology, social networking and the Internet, whereby many young people have been recruited. Many families, not

only in the Arab countries but throughout the world, have discovered that their children have been recruited by terrorist groups. It is indeed a nightmare and a deadly virus. How can we stand against that phenomenon?

First of all, the responsibility lies with the State, society and the family. Educational curricula should promote tolerance and openness towards others. I therefore call for obligatory education for both girls and boys. It may be surprising to those here present that I should raise this issue, but I do so because certain countries in the world have not yet achieved that Millennium Development Goal. Many families deprive their young girls of an education because they believe that a woman's place is in the home as a mother. However, there is a saying in Arabic that a mother is a school. If the mother is healthy, then the entire family and society as a whole will be healthy. We must protect our children from the ideas of the extremists.

I also wish to highlight the accelerating rate of young people dropping out of school. In such conditions, they can become easy targets for criminal groups involved with drug trafficking and other aspects of organized crime. We have seen members of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham originating from over 80 countries, according to the most recent reports.

In 2013, the Arab Thought Foundation published a report showing that the most serious challenge facing the Arab countries is the need to provide approximately 80 million employment opportunities by the year 2020. The Director-General of the International Labour Organization has also referred to that challenge, which threatens the security of the entire region. There are many reasons for this phenomenon, including political, economic and social shortcomings in the region that have led many young people to migrate, many of whom have fallen victim to the sea while seeking a lost paradise. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees recently announced the drowning of 800 migrants.

The Kingdom of Morocco has welcomed the initiative of King Mohammed VI to establish a centre for the training of religious leaders and the promotion of tolerant and moderate discourse. The centre has provided appropriate training to religious leaders from Africa and Europe in the framework of a cooperation agreement among the Governments of many African countries. Another forum involving young parliamentarians is also a useful tool, in addition to a television station with the main objective of enlightening young people in identifying hatred-based discourse. I believe that it is possible to combat extremism by providing young people with open-minded, proper education, including enlightened ideas. Miracles can occur because, when people are motivated and empowered, they will certainly succeed.

To conclude, I wish to reiterate Morocco's support for this morning's youth initiative. I believe that its content will prove to be as important as it is timely. Moreover, I support the proposal of Brazil and Spain for the creation of the post of Assistant Secretary-General for matters affecting young people.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Kenya.

Ms. Grignon (Kenya): On behalf of the Kenyan delegation, I wish to congratulate the Jordanian presidency on convening today's open debate on the role of youth in countering violent extremism and promoting peace. We also wish to commend you on the manner in which you have conducted the affairs of the Council during the month of April, during which important deliberations and conclusions have been achieved.

We also wish to thank you for the detailed concept paper (S/2015/231, annex) that has guided today's debate. We appreciate the commitment shown by His Royal Highness the Crown Prince of Jordan in chairing the morning session in person. Indeed, my President, President Uhuru Kenyatta, was in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan just a few days ago, where he and his colleagues attended a coordination meeting for the Horn of Africa countries, focusing on the fight against terrorism and radicalization.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive remarks on the subject, as well as the two keynote speakers, for their incisive comments.

I would like to align our statement with that of Ambassador Téte António on behalf of the African Union, and to add some of our own views in my national capacity.

My delegation notes with satisfaction the Security Council's concerted efforts to address violent extremism through various resolutions, and commends it for its current efforts, as the custodian of international peace and security, to eradicate the threats posed by violent extremist groups around the world.

Today's debate has a very special significance for Kenya. As the Council is aware, Kenya and other countries in East Africa and the Horn of Africa have been subjected to violent extremism in terrorist attacks perpetrated mainly by Al-Shabaab, a Somali-based Al-Qaida affiliate. The recent attack targeting Christian students at Garissa University College, in which 148 young people were killed, is a case in point. The young people themselves have been fundamentally affected — indeed, in this case both the perpetrators and the victims were young. That act was essentially aimed at emasculating Kenya and its future. The perpetrators of terrorism are just out to kill, irrespective of their targets. Our experience shows that the psychology of the perpetrators is devoid of any form of consciousness or humanity. At this stage, they are just killing machines. That is why preventive efforts, aimed at stopping young people before they reach that stage, are critical.

Today, most regions of the world are grappling with an unprecedented rise in violent extremism, mainly targeting the most important and most vulnerable segment of our society — young people, who are being lured to abandon their promising future as responsible citizens. Young people hold the key to future stability for families, society and nations. Attempts to radicalize them in order to put them on a tragic path of violence and destruction based on ideological beliefs, with the goal of achieving rapid social and political change outside accepted norms, must be addressed now. Those luring young people into extremism have exploited common grievances. A lot of those grievances have been mentioned today, to which I will just add those such as hopelessness, perceived injustices and marginalization, all of which can help radicalize young people and rally them to a cause, often in the name of religion. We condemn such actions in the strongest possible terms and declare that the causes must be addressed.

My delegation believes that together we can overcome violent extremism and help our young people to effectively resist its lure and that of radicalization. We can help them become champions and key actors in countering such extremism by addressing the conditions conducive to its spread and to that of terrorism, as outlined in the first pillar of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, in an inclusive manner that involves young people themselves at each stage of the process, whereby we can actually create societies free of violent extremism. That requires re-examining the way in which we deal with and treat young people in our intergovernmental dialogue, national discourse and local conversations. We must look at young people more as presenting an opportunity to defeat violent extremism and radicalization. To do that, we must empower them with various tools so they can confront the agenda of violent extremism. That should include a powerful counter-narrative that they can embrace.

The Government of Kenya has launched various strategic initiatives designed to put young people at the forefront of the fight against violent extremism and to promote peace by encouraging resilience in the face of extremism. The measures that we have adopted and are implementing include, first, education policies ensuring that the maximum educational opportunities are available to all young people at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, as a bulwark against extremism. They include specific education and outreach policies targeted to those who are most vulnerable to violent extremism, and innovative programmes that nurture young people through the development of talent. Youth development programmes teaching young people about peaceful co-existence have also been initiated.

Second, we have also put in place a special fund, known as the Uwezo Fund, which seeks to expand access to financing and promote enterprises led by women, young people and persons with disabilities. It provides mentorship opportunities to enable young people to take advantage of their 30 per cent Government procurement preference through its capacity-building programme. It is an avenue that is creating employment.

Third, the Government is now giving sustained fiscal attention to focusing more on economic transformation priorities, which are likely to have the greatest impact on youth economic empowerment. These include investments in information and communications technology, agricultural transformation and food security; in modern transport and logistics; in accessible health care and the strengthening of social safety nets in order to reduce household burdens.

Fourth, a national youth council and youth fund are fully operational and working to oversee the programmatic aspects of the economic transformation agenda, which, among other things, calls for enhanced support for devolved governance and resources aimed at enhancing service delivery at the grass-roots level.

Fifth, through its National Youth Service, the Government has initiated programmes that seek to rehabilitate and mentor destitute children and young people vulnerable to radicalization and recruitment.

The Youth Service empowers them with values that give them a sense of identity, belonging and direction, as well as promoting national values of tolerance, patriotism, loyalty and unity.

Sixth, the Government is also committed to creating partnerships with local communities, civil society and religious leaders, and to engaging other actors to keep vulnerable young people positively engaged.

Seventh, we have launched initiatives for regional cooperation and inter-regional youth exchanges, aimed at developing and promoting a common understanding on addressing youth-related issues with a view to enhancing resilience in the face of extremism and other social problems. This involves sharing experiences and best practices that can help young people to empower themselves in confronting radicalization and extremism.

Eighth and last is the enhancement of the capacity of Kenyan prison authorities to identify specific cases of possible radicalization in corrective institutions and facilities, and to initiate rehabilitation programmes that target such cases.

The delegation of Kenya wishes to assure the Security Council that our Government will continue to build institutional and community-level capacity, especially at the grassroots level, that can enable youth and women's groups to counter violent extremism in their communities, and will continue to partner with the United Nations and other development partners and stakeholders to identify new approaches and innovative ways to counter violent extremism and radicalization.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Lebanon.

Ms. Ziade (Lebanon): I would like to begin by thanking the Jordanian presidency for organizing this important meeting and circulating the concept paper on the role of youth in countering violent extremism and promoting peace (S/2015/231, annex). I would also like to commend His Royal Highness for presiding over this meeting and for his commitment to youth issues. And I would like to express our deep appreciation to the Secretary-General and all the briefers.

Today there are more than 1 billion youth around the world, a young population characterized by its unprecedented access to information technology. At the same time, this population faces many challenges that exacerbate its vulnerability, with more than 6 million youth living in fragile and conflict regions, and about 75 million unemployed.

Youth are to be found on both sides of terrorist activities. They are targeted in their schools, universities and homes, in Palestine, Libya, Yemen, Pakistan, Central Africa and Kenya, and youth are targeting journalists and tourists in Paris, Tunisia, Sweden and Brussels, among other places. This alarming phenomenon emphasizes that terrorist attacks transcend borders and are not limited to one country, religion or ethnicity and represent a serious threat to international peace and security around the world.

Prevention starts on benches in schools and continues throughout the social mobility chain. Education is pivotal in building up the resilience of future generations. It should engrave in them knowledge, human rights, understanding of the other, openness, dialogue, tolerance and the rule of law. It should promote critical thinking that will help fight bigotry, stereotyping and essentialism. Education should also be oriented to the needs of the labour market and ensure a dignified livelihood, social inclusion and a wider participation in the public political sphere.

The fight for the minds of young people should continue through standing up to the attractiveness of extremist and intolerant religious figures. Modern and attractive social organizations for youth should constitute a better alternative in order to educate and prepare those youth for leadership posts and to be positive role models.

All of the organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations should continue to work relentlessly to address the root causes of terrorism, to fully implement strategies highlighting the interlinkages between peace and development, with a strong emphasis on the needs of youth, and, most importantly, putting an end to impunity and double standards in the implementation of law and ensuring justice.

The Middle East and the Arab world are informed by the Israeli occupation, protracted conflicts, violations of human rights, shattered dreams, an unprecedented surge in terrorism and radicalization whose main focus is on youth, who represent one third of our Arab population.

Aware that the youth are our ray of hope in the midst of all these challenges, my Government adopted in 2012 a youth policy in Lebanon, drafted by young people and capturing their priorities in five areas,

namely, demography and economic participation; education and culture; health; social integration; and political participation. Moreover, Lebanon's vibrant civil society has always offered platforms for inclusive dialogue between its young people, with full respect for their intellectual diversity. Suffice to mention the Common Space Initiative, whose objective is to build youth capacity in debate and solution formulation in the context of national and regional programmes; and the Adyan workshops, during which young people such as Sara, a young Lebanese woman, state that they are determined to break stereotypes and draw a different picture of Islam than the one promoted by terrorism and extremism.

This journey, at the national, regional and international levels, will not be successful if our youth are not our partners in elaborating a plan of action to fight terrorism. They are not only the future generation; we need to involve them now in today's affairs to secure a better future for all of us.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan.

Ms. Lodhi (Pakistan): Mr. President, my delegation thanks you for having convened this important debate. Violent extremism has emerged as one of the most complex challenges of our time. It has claimed innocent lives, caused wide-scale destruction and disrupted social order as well as State structures. Its scope, nature, causes and manifestations make it a global phenomenon, and this requires a common understanding and cooperative solutions.

A critical aspect of this challenge is the radicalization of youth, which often leads them to commit violent acts. But youth are also the key to building resilience against this threat. We therefore welcome Jordan's initiative to highlight the role of youth in addressing this challenge.

Throughout history, youth have been the engine of change, for good or for bad. The energy of youth can generate progress and prosperity but, equally, it can exacerbate violence and war. It is up to States and societies to ensure that the energy and idealism of youth is directed towards promoting peace and progress rather than conflict and chaos. When young people become alienated within societies, when they perceive oppression and injustice, local or global, they become susceptible to seduction by the ideologues of extremism.

The rise of violent extremism has a direct correlation with conflicts and disputes; foreign intervention and occupation; religious, racial and ethnic discrimination or persecution; and social and economic exclusion. Extremists use such injustices to lure youth into supporting their agenda. The radicalization of youth in certain Western States flows from social alienation, economic marginalization and the growing phenomenon of Islamophobia. A major step to reverse this is legislation to prohibit insults to religions and to establish a clear distinction between free speech and hate speech.

The Council, even as it considers the social and economic dimensions of this phenomenon, has a vital political role to play. It must intensify its efforts to address long-standing conflicts and disputes.

The radicalization of youth cannot be understood, much less addressed or curbed, shorn of its political, social and economic context. Economic and political exclusion and social injustice fuel disenchantment, which drives young men and women towards extremism, and that in turn assures terrorist groups of a steady supply of recruits. We know only too well how the youth bulge in several parts of the Middle East has played a major role in the political upheavals of recent years. The interplay between demographics, lack of socioeconomic opportunity and radicalization magnifies the challenge of violent extremism.

When economic opportunity fails to keep pace with demographics, young people become particularly vulnerable to being attracted to extremist narratives. Social frustration and economic deprivation thus provide a breeding ground for violent extremism. So if violent extremists are to be defeated, the economic empowerment of youth must be a major component of a counter-radicalization strategy. Building resilience in communities and societies is necessary to evolve an effective strategy, because resilience and cohesion are essential bulwarks against violent extremism. This entails enlisting the support and trust of local communities, particularly youth and women. Educational programmes, as many others have emphasized before me, can play a vital role in fostering values of tolerance, harmony and respect for diversity.

The role of religious leaders is no less important, because they can contribute to shaping young people's attitudes and building their resilience. They can also help to counter and delegitimize acts of violence, regardless of justifications or motivations.

We in Pakistan are pursuing a comprehensive approach that involves, in addition to law enforcement, educational, social and economic measures. Acknowledging the key importance of creating economic opportunities for young people and harnessing their potential to promote national progress, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif launched a special youth programme last year. It is designed to provide educational and vocational support and socioeconomic opportunity in the form of special schemes for young people.

As part of our national action plan to counter terrorism, Pakistan has taken other steps to curb violent extremism. Those have included curbs on hate speech and material, steps against religious persecution, registration of religious schools and measures against the use of social media for terrorism or its glorification. We support the useful work of the United Nations Centre for Counter-Terrorism in that area. Next month, with the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, my country will co-host in Islamabad a skills development and needs assessment conference focused on youth.

The United Nations with its expertise, on-the-ground experience and unique convening power can play a leading role in developing a comprehensive strategy. Given the complexity and global dimensions of violent extremism, the General Assembly should also be enabled to play a leading role in developing a multifaceted strategy, building on resolution 68/127. We hope that the September United Nations summit on the issue will provide a clear direction towards that end.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Khoshroo (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset, I would like to thank Jordan for convening this meeting on a very critical issue facing the world and our youth.

Today, young people are in a paradoxical situation in relation to Islam and the West. This critical situation is rooted in two seemingly contradictory but inherently complementary realities. On the one hand, we have witnessed the expansion of extremism and terrorism, which can be observed in some Western capitals as much as in the villages and cities of some Islamic countries. On the other hand, Islamophobia has been spreading across the West and implanting hatred and fear in the fabric of Western societies.

Where are the youth in the midst of this conflicting and contradictory situation? Have they caused the rise of this situation or are they simply its victims? Who are those who have created the situation and what interest is to be served? What is the role of young people in the equation? The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in a message addressed to the young in the West, called upon them to free themselves from that imposed and destructive quandary. He added that today, modern communication technology has blurred geographical boundaries. The young must not allow themselves to be confined within fabricated mental walls.

What are these artificial mental walls? They have their foundation in destructive ideologies, which have two attributes. First, they are tainted with ignorance, superficiality and fanatical outlooks. Secondly, they are also violence-oriented and based on terror and *takfir*, that is, considering others or those who are different as apostates. Those centres that propagate such ideologies falsely under the name of Islam and spend billions of dollars to spread them through satellite television and social and traditional media are fuelling the spread of ignorance and violence. They specifically prey on youth and link them to their networks of extremism and terrorism.

Today's world has witnessed a nefarious show of violence in the Middle East and North Africa. If those behind that show are not confronted, the danger they create can increase exponentially and lead to the most threatening global security crisis. It seems that the process has given rise to Islamophobia in the West. However, the financial, political and cultural centres of such hate-mongering and takfiri ideologies are indeed allied to the bases of might and money in certain corners in the West. Such power centres use global media to target Islam, to attempt to depict it as the greatest threat and to emphasize the inevitability of the bloody conflict between Islam and the West.

Those ideologies, those global terrorists and the fear-mongering media do not represent Islam. They all lie at the core of Islamophobia and the acts that target Muslims. In the message of Iran's Supreme Leader, youth are called upon to stay aloof from this unjustified crisis and to distance themselves in a savvy and clear-sighted way from the ideologies based on ignorance and violence. Islam is a religion of compassion and wisdom,

and the way its Prophet lived demonstrates a peaceful way of life, imbued with wisdom and empathy, which it recommends to all. The earnest young people who seek truth should break the mental barriers raised both by Islamophobia and takfiri ideologies and set a new path in the interaction between Islam and the West. Thanks to those young people, the relation between Islam and the West will be based on constructive interaction, mutual respect and fairness. And that is exactly what the Islamic Republic of Iran is looking for in terms of global cooperation to combat extremism and violence.

Iranians, especially young Iranians, have been the most immune when it comes to the propaganda and recruitment of violent extremism, which is a matter of pride to us. I would like to take this opportunity to once again reaffirm Iran's unquestionable commitment to combating violent extremism, especially in the context of our fight against the most dangerous of terrorist groups in our region, such as Al-Qaida, Daesh and similar groups that have also been the most successful in preying upon the young all over the world.

Finally, I wish to say that President Hassan Rouhani of Iran introduced a comprehensive agenda for a world against violence and violent extremism, which was adopted by the General Assembly as resolution 68/127 at its sixty-eighth session. The agenda provides a path to combat violent extremism and empower young people around the world, and its importance has never been more clear.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Austria.

Mr. Sajdik (Austria): At the outset, let me thank the Jordanian presidency for convening today's open debate.

We are currently witnessing a dramatic rise of radicalization and extremism in the name of religion, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa. However, violent extremism is not the challenge of one region alone; it exists everywhere. As Austrian Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz stated in the Security Council on 27 March (see S/PV.7419), it is a dangerous development that young women and men seem to be the targets of radicalization by terrorist groups.

The phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters who travel to conflict areas such as Iraq and Syria constitutes a new security threat. At a time when the youth population worldwide has reached an all-time record, extremist groups are globally recruiting ever-younger foreign fighters, often by using social media. Young people are attracted to extremist ideologies because of their marginalization in society. Poverty and limited educational and employment opportunities create discontent. Often, young people are also not heard by decision-makers, and their self-organization in community-based associations and groups is met with suspicion. Wherever young people are marginalized, this is also the result of failed politics.

Today's debate highlights the need for the international community to redouble its efforts to counter the recruitment of young people by extremists. Allow me to make some suggestions on what needs to be done. We have to continue to support efforts to address the underlying factors leading to the radicalization of youth. We need to ensure that all young people have access to quality education and job opportunities. From early on, young people need to understand the intrinsic value of diversity as a factor for the enrichment of society. Young people need to learn about their human rights and the human rights of others.

Young people need to know that they have the right to participate in decision-making processes within society, and they need to be encouraged to do so. Many of the freedoms that young people are enjoying today are being taken for granted. However, we need to convey the message to young people that the freedom they are enjoying today is the result of a long and often arduous process and that they also have a responsibility to promote freedom as a core value of our society. When lacking prospects, young people may risk turning to extremism. We therefore have to show them that they are an integral part of society by offering them ways of participation, such as voluntary work.

We need to use innovative mechanisms to reach young people, using the Internet and social media to counter messages of hatred with messages of hope. We need to support civil society organizations in creating the space for learning opportunities for youth. Civic engagement, such as volunteering, yields life-long benefits and strengthens self-worth and resilience tow extremist ideologies. Religious leaders play an important role in promoting respect and tolerance and should therefore be involved in the preparation of effective prevention campaigns. Equally, we must strengthen partnerships with the private sector. In order to thrive, companies need an educated work force. Public-private partnerships, such as the apprenticeship programmes we have been employing in Austria, yield

good results both for companies and young people themselves.

Intercultural dialogue contributes to global trust-building, supports mutual understanding and promotes pluralism in our society. Austria actively participates in the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and supports its further development. In that regard, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly for organizing the important high-level thematic debate on promoting tolerance and reconciliation that took place earlier this week.

Austria is taking action to intensify the international cooperation in counter-terrorism efforts, especially in the West Balkans. In mid-March, we adopted an action plan to confront jihadism together with all West Balkans countries. It includes, for example, closer cooperation among law enforcement authorities, enhanced border security and joint efforts to remove terrorist content from the Internet. Our ultimate goal must be to prevent a new generation of terrorists from emerging.

We are very concerned about the use of foreign fighters by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, the Al-Nusra Front and other terrorist organizations and the risks that these foreign fighters may pose upon their return. We are committed to ensuring the swift and full implementation of Security Council resolutions on all measures against extremism and terrorism, especially resolution 2170 (2014), calling on Member States to suppress the flow of foreign fighters, as well as financing and support to Islamist extremist groups in Iraq and Syria.

As President of the Economic and Social Council, I have been fortunate to preside over the 2014 and 2015 Youth Forums. The Youth Forum attracts more than 500 young people to engage in dialogue among themselves and with Member States on their priorities and their vision for the future. This year, young people focused on ways to participate more in shaping their countries' development strategies and become active participants in bringing justice and peace to their communities. We need to listen to them and take their views into account when developing strategies to counter violent extremism. The Economic and Social Council will continue providing this platform for youth from around the world to advance solutions to the challenges they and their societies face. In that context, I commend all the tireless efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, Mr. Ahmad Alhendawi.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Oh Joon (Republic of Korea): Mr. President, I would like to thank you and the Jordanian presidency for convening this important debate on countering violent extremism.

Today, the number of foreign terrorist fighters is higher than ever in history. The fact that a significant proportion of these individuals are young people, some barely 15 years old, is a particularly alarming trend. One of the most pressing security challenges we face today is preventing these young people from falling into the grip of violent extremism. Yet the difficult reality is that there is no single, one-size-fits-all solution to this multifaceted problem. The motivation behind youth radicalization varies by society, and diverse factors are involved, ranging from extremist ideology to socioeconomic factors and personal grievances. Preventing radicalization will therefore require an equally diverse and multidimensional approach. I would like to share a few thoughts in this regard.

First, we need to more effectively counter extremist narratives and propaganda that prey on the minds of young people. Groups like the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant promote and propagate distorted views and interpretations of religion, history and the world through the Internet and social media. To prevent the radicalization of youth, we need first to have a clear understanding of why these messages have such an appeal to so many young people across different societies. Simply shutting down websites and suspending Facebook accounts will not yield the results we hoped for. We must develop and disseminate effective, persuasive messages that will convince these young people that the ideologies promoted by extremist propaganda are just false and empty promises. Our winning point should be free and diverse societies that offer the right path to true dignity, opportunities and happiness for all. Schools, families and religious communities should play a central role in telling young people that they will not find any opportunities or future in extremism.

Secondly, community engagement is of particular importance in preventing youth radicalization, as stressed by resolution 2178 (2014). Disaffected youths in each society are easily targeted by extremist recruiters,

who lure them with promises of a new community and collective identity. It is the home communities themselves that are best placed to protect their youths from such vulnerability, by providing them with a sense of belonging, identity and job opportunities.

Thirdly, from a broader perspective, we should delve deeper and address the social gaps and ills that allow violent extremism to take root. Good governance, the protection of human rights and development are all essential elements in addressing the grievances and hopelessness that breed violent extremism. Of crucial importance, too, is the role of education that teaches our future generations universal values such as human dignity, diversity and tolerance, as emphasized in the concept of global citizenship education.

As Secretary General Ban Ki-moon stressed at the Washington, D.C., Summit on countering violent extremism last February, preventing violent extremism may be the greatest test that our human family faces in the twenty-first century. It is time for us to join hands and pull together our wisdom in order to tackle this formidable challenge.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Montenegro.

Ms. Pajević (Montenegro): We thank the President for convening today's debate on the role of youth in countering violent extremism in promoting peace. We commend Jordan's strong commitment to this issue. We also thank today's briefers for their outstanding presentations.

Montenegro aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of European Union. However, I would like to highlight some points of particular importance to my country.

Today, more than 1 billion people are defined as youth. Youth are vital stakeholders in shaping social and economic development, challenging social norms and values and building the foundation of the world's future. They have proved to be instrumental in fostering constructive dialogue among religions, faiths and civilizations, and have provided valuable contributions to the promotion of peace, tolerance and diversity.

We are witnessing the devastating and enduring impact of violence and the culture of violence, which is overwhelming different parts of the world. In particular, young people face obstacles, ranging from discrimination, marginalization and poverty, to violence. Their voices are distinctively underrepresented on issues that concern them, including violent extremism — one of the most critical challenges that youth face today. Young people are the main victims of direct violence in conflict situations, but they are also the perpetrators of violence, owing to their vulnerability to both voluntary and involuntary military recruitment.

Extremism is not something that can just be ignored, but needs to be tackled head-on because its consequences are clear. The risk of extremism grows where young people have no education and no hope for the future, as that makes them most vulnerable to the influence of radical ideas. However, Governments cannot act alone on this issue. Additionally, we should be aware that no external power can bring about the transformation of hearts and minds. That task falls on countries and their peoples themselves. The potential of youth to facilitate the process of countering violent extremism is often undermined. Therefore, we believe it is crucial to involve youth in the process as stakeholders and decision-makers. That would allow them to gain ownership of the policies that affect them and all of us.

Montenegro commends all the efforts aimed at addressing the needs and priorities of young people and at proposing sustainable solutions to their problems. There are many talented and creative young men and women who are pioneering in innovation, new social media tools and means to reach the young population. My Government has taken stock of that fact. Through the education system, we prepare young people to think in a creative and critical way, to cooperate, communicate and take risks. The goal of our economic policy is to foster, encourage and facilitate the creation of new jobs and new businesses, as well as the growth of existing ones, with special emphasis on youth.

In addition, through the implementation of different programmes and projects, such as the one that we are implementing with the United Nations Development Programme, called Youth Empowerment, we provide the younger generations with self-confidence and ambition to be constructive and valued members of society as well as to be successful in the new globalized economy — while promoting peace, tolerance and diversity. We will expand similar programmes and projects, and we are currently preparing a new strategic and legislative framework. We believe that such investments are the winning card for any society that strives for a better future and are also the best antidote to violence.

Many States have a predominantly young population. Therefore, it is a demographic and democratic imperative that young people be active participants in decision-making and be treated as a vital asset for society. Providing youth with the right educational tools for crisis-prevention and peacebuilding impact positively on youth's development and helps to bring about more sustainable peace. Moreover, addressing the realization of the human rights of young people is a way of influencing the social and economic conditions and the well-being and livelihood of future generations. Only by approaching the issue of violent extremism and promoting peace in this way, can we ever hope to face the challenges of ensuring lasting global peace.

Montenegro remains committed to addressing this important issue, with the aim of ensuring better inclusion of youth in mainstream decision-making processes and reducing their political and social marginalization. We will also continue to be a reliable partner of the United Nations in its activities in the promotion of tolerance and reconciliation. Proud of its values and achievements and confident in the future, we will work along side it for the realization of international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, United Nations High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations.

Mr. Al-Nasser: I am honoured to speak here today to tell the Security Council about the efforts of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in promoting peace and tolerance through a special focus on youth. I wish to thank the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for organizing this important meeting, which has particular importance for the maintenance of International Peace and Security. The fact that Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II presided over this meeting earlier illustrates Jordan's great leadership as an active member of the Security Council.

For me personally, as well as in my capacity as High Representative of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, placing the world's young people at the forefront of United Nations counter-terrorism efforts is crucial at both the level of prevention and in post-conflict situations. We know from our experiences in supporting youth-led initiatives on the ground that peaceful and inclusive societies cannot be sustainably built without the participation and engagement of young people. Two thirds of the world's population are comprised of youth. Furthermore, in most conflict-affected and post-conflict countries, young people account for more than 50 per cent of the population.

However, I find that, to date, our discussion on youth, peace and security has been limited, both in its focus and the degree to which it actually engages young people. The cultural dimension is essential when addressing youth issues, in particular to safeguard their hearts and minds from the influence of radicalization. I know how this body, the Security Council, has spearheaded the world's thinking on a number of critical matters regarding global peace and security. For youth, however, the international community still lacks a comprehensive position and holistic policy, commitments, priorities and responsibilities to fulfil the aspirations of young people around the world.

That is where the role of the Alliance of Civilizations comes into play in order to complement the efforts of United Nations bodies and of Member States. We are able to do so through practical projects and activities thanks to the financial support of Member States, specialized non-governmental organizations and corporate-sector partners. Let me start by mentioning our fellowship programme.

Through the programme, every year, we sponsor young people from Western and Eastern countries and conduct country visits with them. That programme enables young people to understand other cultures and traditions, to believe in the importance of living with the others and to encourage them to reject violence based on culture or religion. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jordan for hosting the fellows earlier this year, along with Morocco and Qatar. I look forward to receiving the support of other countries that wish to do the same.

The Youth Solidarity Fund, through which the Alliance of Civilizations has reached more than 10,000 youth-led organizations and hundreds of thousands of young people around the world with its grant-making and capacity-building workshops. Another example is the Intercultural Innovation Award, which is a model example of public-private engagement between the Alliance of Civilizations and BMW Group, through which we support innovative grass-roots initiatives that advance cross-cultural dialogue. A more recent example is Entrepreneurs for Social Change. There are other programmes as well, including Plural+, which gives young film-makers a platform to speak about identity; and the annual Summer School, which brings together young activists and social innovators from around the

world for a week of training exercises here in New York. All of those Alliance of Civilizations programmes are oriented around the recognition of one fundamental truth: that the primary agents of change — not just in the future, but in our present — are young people.

Over the last decade, the world's attention to terrorism and violent extremism has brought a sharp focus to the role of youth in the commission of terrorist acts. We all know that, through media and the use of information and communication technologies, youth are exposed to new and emerging threats to global security, but also to themselves. Sadly, recent dramatic events have demonstrated that young people can indeed be seduced into committing heinous crimes and unspeakable violence, while also being victims of such acts and environments. I feel deeply for them, in particular those who live in zones of protracted conflict and whose only mistake is having been born there.

Many countries with a high proportion of young people have not suffered violence, due to a high gross domestic product and social welfare. In fact, research suggests that a higher risk of violent conflict exists in countries where youth "bulges" coincide with periods of long-term economic decline, limited educational and employment opportunities, exclusion from social, cultural and political participation, and an absence of equal opportunities. Most young people do not engage in violence unless they were taught to do so by someone older, even in conflict settings. To be effective in our work, we need to recognize that fact.

Many young people suffer high levels of relative deprivation, discrimination and exclusion, and many young men do not fit the social standards of manhood; and yet most do not engage in violence. Studies suggest that strong communities and young people's involvement in community associations expand their sense of belonging, and that such opportunities act as important deterrents to engagement in violence. We need to partner with young people to assert positive group identities, and sweep the rug from underneath extremists who try to provide them with one. But that is not the headline. For me, the headline remains that young people are an extraordinary force of social progress, development and, eventually, human advancement. Young women and men are important drivers and agents of change in the reconstruction and development of their societies.

Today, young people are often more open to change, feedback and learning, and tend to be more future-oriented. Today they are more idealistic, creative and innovative, and perhaps more willing to take risks. Their ability to interact with one another and with adults, and to communicate, is also unprecedented. How do I know that? I know that because of various activities. We have hundreds of successful examples of young people who started their lives as activists in the area of innovation, promoting coexistence among faiths, opposing social injustice and addressing sectarian violence and tensions in their countries through meaningful activities and venues.

Giving young people a stake in their societies during the transition period after violent conflict is important for long-term peace and security. That said, we must also recognize that in conflict-affected countries, youth structures, systems and networks, where they exist, often have limited political influence, weak capacity and are poorly resourced. Youth policies tend to be underfunded and under implemented. Few of them make specific contributions to peace and security, such as the need to prevent the engagement of youth in violence, to protect young men and women from violence and to promote meaningful participation in political processes.

Overall, the evidence suggests that in the context of peace and security, many Member States do not pay sufficient attention to their youth population. There is sometimes a lack of trust and understanding, political will and, in some cases, limited capacity and resources to act. But this debate is a sign that the tide is turning. Under the initiative of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Security Council is boosting the role of young people as partners in peace, security and in countering violent extremism. To recognize the positive role young people can play, several entities of the United Nations — the Peacebuilding Commission, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, UNICEF, the Alliance of Civilizations and others — in partnership with such civil society organizations as Search for Common Ground, World Vision and the United Network of Young Peacebuilders, published the Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding last year.

In conclusion, I firmly believe that those principles should guide our discussions in the Council today and in the future. Young people's participation is essential to successful peacebuilding. Around the world, young people are already leaders of today, not just leaders

of tomorrow. We must use this platform to help them amplify and scale up their efforts. I am personally committed to doing so, and the Alliance of Civilizations stands ready to work with the Council and engage further with the United Nations system to address these questions. In the face of violent extremism, partnering with young people and enhancing their dedication to peace must be part of the solution.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Turkey.

Mr. Çevik (Turkey): At the outset, I would like to thank the President for organizing this important debate.

Youth are a key asset and the hope for peaceful and prosperous societies. Yet today an unprecedented number of young people travel to Syria and Iraq to fight as foreign terrorist fighters alongside terrorist groups such as Daesh. Similarly, the ranks of Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram consist predominantly of young people. On all continents, an increasing number of young men and women are vulnerable to extremist ideologies, radicalization and terrorism.

In order to counter that phenomenon, it is necessary to take robust measures to stop young people from travelling to conflict zones, as required by resolution 2178 (2014). Turkey has been doing its part by adopting numerous measures, including enhancing controls at borders and establishing a no-entry list. Needless to say, that struggle cannot be led by Turkey alone, and effective international cooperation and timely information-sharing, particularly on the part of the source countries, are crucial.

On that point, since issues related to recruitment and travel to conflict zones have been highlighted earlier with specific references, let me mention one striking example that recently received wide press coverage. According to media reports, the United States citizen who took part in a suicide bombing in Syria was believed to have travelled to that country more than once. That is a reminder of the importance of close cooperation and information-sharing.

In addressing that phenomenon, the first step is to understand the root causes of radicalization among youth. As underlined in the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, effective counter-terrorism requires the eradication of conditions conducive to its spread. In that task, it is important to remember that radicalization and violent extremism are not peculiar to one particular religion, faith or community. The process that leads to violent extremism may have different triggering factors, ranging from underdevelopment to a feeling of discrimination. Particular emphasis should be placed on better designed integration policies. The more migrant communities are truly integrated where they live, the easier it will be to marginalize extremism and to overcome the perceived grievances of being left out, stigmatized and rejected.

Protracted conflicts nourish conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism among youth. Other factors that contribute to such conditions include the absence of the rule of law, violations of human rights, ethnic, national and religious discrimination, political exclusion, socioeconomic marginalization and lack of good governance. The multiple factors that can lead to youth radicalization show that a holistic approach involving multiple branches of Government and various sectors of civil society is needed. A whole-of-Government strategy must be supported by a whole-of-society approach.

In Turkey, several Government agencies including security, youth, education and social policy institutions, are involved in such efforts. Furthermore, the Office of Religious Affairs of the Prime Ministry plays a special role in Turkey as an actor in efforts to combat violent extremism by harmonizing Friday sermons through guidelines that accentuate the message of peace in Islam.

International cooperation can be instrumental in empowering youth in the face of violent extremi[illegible]. Both the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and relevant Security Council resolutions, such as resolutions 1624 (2005) and 2178 (2014), identify the concrete steps to be taken. We welcome the announcement by the Secretary-General of an action plan on preventing violent extremism at the White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism in February. We believe that youth must be an important target group of those efforts. In that framework, we welcome the projects already implemented by the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre and the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, focusing on youth, and we call for their continuation. In addition to the joint United Nations efforts, the many framework and good-practices documents — including those adopted by the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and other platforms — can provide us with valuable guidance.

As terrorists use and abuse modern communications technologies to spread their morbid messages, protecting youth from those toxic indoctrination attempts requires conveying messages of peace and tolerance to them as part of our common struggle against discrimination, intolerance, racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and discrimination against Christians and members of other religions. In that context, the Alliance of Civilizations, of which Turkey is a sponsor, is doing valuable work with respect to the topic of our debate through numerous projects and activities that focus on four main pillars, namely, youth, education, media and migration. Young people should trust that regardless of the differences in our beliefs, we can live in unity, peace and harmony. Only thus can our societies be truly resilient in the face of violent extremism.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Georgia.

Mr. Kvelashvili (Georgia): At the outset, let me express our heartfelt gratitude to the presidency of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for organizing today's open debate and, personally, to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II for his leadership, which has significantly contributed to the constructive and comprehensive nature of our deliberations today.

Georgia fully supports and shares the vision, approaches and conclusions outlined in the concept paper (S/2015/215, annex) disseminated earlier by the Permanent Mission of Jordan, and calls on all stakeholders to play a more vigorous role in our joint efforts aimed at countering violent extremism. We are also convinced that it is time for the international community to stand firmly for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, and underline the importance of respect for international law for the sake of peace and stability in the world.

Georgia fully associates itself with the statement made by the Head of the Delegation of the European Union. In addition, I would like to make some comments in my national capacity.

The latest developments in the Middle East, Africa and Eastern Europe have clearly demonstrated that we cannot take our security for granted, and in today's uncertain world, all like-minded countries must stand united to protect and promote peace, stability and a rules-based world order. Georgia believes that utter disrespect for the fundamental principles of international law and for human rights and basic freedoms in domestic affairs have significantly contributed to the dangerous erosion of trust among nations and peoples, which has in turn played a pivotal role in all recent manifestations of violent extremism and the radicalization of youth in certain parts of the world.

For instance, European security is being significantly challenged by the Russian Federation's aggressive behaviour towards its neighbours, especially Georgia and Ukraine, through the ongoing illegal military occupation of integral parts of our sovereign territories. That worrisome pattern of arbitrarily altering international borders by force poses a significant threat not only to the strategic vision of a Europe whole, free and at peace, but also to the notion of amicable relations among young men and women of all countries of our region. When State-run mass media, especially television, encourage extreme forms of nationalism and violent ideology and try to justify on chauvinistic grounds the grabbing and annexing of foreign lands, youth radicalization becomes a common phenomenon.

With regard to the Middle East, we are deeply shocked and distressed by the violent developments and rapid deterioration of the security situation in parts of Iraq and Syria. Georgia condemns in the strongest terms the despicable acts of terrorism and violence against civilian populations on the basis of their religious and ethnic affiliation. Terrorist groups such as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) pose threats not only to the nations of the Middle East but also to Europe, North America and beyond. It is only through our joint efforts and commitment that we can stop, reverse and prevent such violent actions from happening.

We fully support international cooperative efforts to counter ISIL. Georgia has already joined three counter-ISIL working groups on counter-financing, counter-messaging and foreign terrorist fighters. We hope that the work of those groups will further increase the level of coordination and dialogue among coalition members.

At the national level, Georgia, which has historically been an example of ethnic and religious tolerance, is working on modifying a domestic policy aimed at countering the rising global threat of extremism and terrorism. My Government has already initiated the relevant legislative amendments, whose adoption aims at bringing the criminal code of Georgia in line with the best international practices. It is of special importance

that, inter alia, the amendments will criminalize the whole spectrum of activities related to foreign terrorist fighters, in accordance with resolution 2178 (2014).

At the same, more has to be done at national and international levels to address the root causes conducive to the spread of violent extremism, including policies aimed at social and economic development, and fostering education and youth employment, as well as their political empowerment.

The participation of third-country citizens as foreign terrorist fighters in ISIL and other terrorist groups is a matter of serious concern. Addressing this problem, especially taking into account its transnational and cross-border nature, requires coordinated approaches. We stand ready to work closely with our international partners in countering the global problems posed by foreign terrorist fighters by better coordinating our efforts, as well as exchanging experience and good practices.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Netherlands.

Mr. van Oosterom (Netherlands): First, let me thank the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for the initiative to organize this important and very timely debate.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands aligns itself with the statement made earlier by the observer of the European Union.

In view of time constraints, I will limit myself to the main points of my statement. My full statement will be available via my Twitter account. I will address three issues: education, our international involvement and the importance of inclusiveness.

First, with regard to education, the Netherlands has an active policy aimed at strengthening the role of young people in countering violent extremism and promoting peace. Our approach is characterized by strengthening the role of families, professionals and their communities in countering radicalization and social tensions.

The Netherlands aims to enhance knowledge and expertise within the triangle of parents, schools and their social environment. In our view, parents play a key role in preventing radicalization. To reach parents, we have developed a set of tools and answers that provide guidance for education in this context. We organize local information sessions about recruitment methods and the dangers children face on the Internet, an issue many of us have addressed before.

In addition, the Netherlands has set up a national advisory centre that offers support to family members of radicalized individuals. Furthermore, we aim to enhance the expertise of professionals in education to better identify and discuss radicalization. We train many teachers in recognizing radicalization and acting upon it. We have developed a toolbox, including web portals, e-learning and networks of front-line professionals who can provide advice. Our schools have the duty to discuss citizenship and related values such as equality, the freedom of expression, the freedom of religion and freedom in general.

My third point in this context is that it is important to be in contact with young people in the immediate vicinity of their communities. In order to influence groups of young people, we involve youth leaders to be voices of moderation and reason. At the local level that requires cooperation among schools, municipalities, the police, civil society and political and religious groups. Municipalities are supported in their efforts to strengthen such community networks — for instance, by organizing group dialogues with parents, professionals and key opinion leaders, such as imams.

The second issue I wish to discuss concerns our international activities. We are involved in many international initiatives. Let me mention the Radicalisation Awareness Network and the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum. Of course, we also support the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, which we are very happy to see represented in the Council. Let me also mention in particular the bilateral cooperation that exists between the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Kingdom of Morocco in preventing terrorism and addressing radicalization. Another specific activity includes our work with non-governmental organizations on this matter. As an example, we have financed a publication on strategic communication in countering the narrative of extremist organizations.

The third issue concerns inclusiveness. The Netherlands firmly believes in the necessity of more inclusive decision-making, which should empower young people to voice their concerns. Young people should be active partners in tolerance and conflict prevention initiatives. We must ensure that their priorities are part of our policies. Governments should be responsive to the concerns of young people. This

holds true in particular for the post-2015 sustainable development agenda. The young people of today are both an object and a subject of that agenda. Not only will it define their future, they will be the ones who in large measure will have to implement it. All sustainable development goals are relevant for the young people of today. Their voice must be heard; their commitment is crucial; their action is needed.

As we speak, the Netherlands United Nations Youth Representative, Jilt van Schayik, is travelling from Amsterdam to South Africa, crossing more than 20 countries and passing through two continents. In good Dutch tradition, he is covering more than 11,000 kilometres by bicycle. The purpose of his journey, called Building Bridges, is to listen to the young people in the countries he visits. We will use his input as valuable content for the post-2015 agenda. Young delegates like him are positive role models for other youth around the world.

In conclusion, the Kingdom of the Netherlands prides itself in being a partner for peace, justice and development. An old Dutch proverb says, "He who is young, controls the future". Let us work together for a future where the youth of today shall wield the tools of peace, justice and development, instead of the arms of hatred and terror.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the observer of the Holy See.

Archbishop Auza (Holy See): At the outset, let me congratulate Jordan for its presidency during this month, and in particular for scheduling this debate on the role of young people in countering violent extremism and promoting peace.

The ever-increasing globalization and technological interconnectedness have brought many benefits to our world today, but they have also created new and emerging challenges. Young people around the world can use the Internet and social media to enter into contact, make friends and learn about the great cultures and traditions of other people in every corner of the world. Unfortunately, those great technological advances can also be manipulated to spread messages of hate and violence. Today's debate allows us to examine more in depth how these harmful messages are finding new audiences and how States can work together to face the challenge.

The phenomenon of young people responding to the recruitment of those inciting them to engage in violent extremism develops within a context of disillusionment and missed opportunities, of sociocultural identity crisis and failed integration, of alienation and dissatisfaction, of intergenerational break-ups and broken families.

A fundamental step in addressing the radicalization of young people is to work with and support the family in its efforts to educate children and young people in the values of dialogue and respect for others, to make them better equipped to resist what appear at first as attractive calls to a higher cause and to adventure with extremist groups. If States really want to reach young people before they are exposed to extremist ideologies, they should render appropriate assistance to parents in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities, according to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Studies and events show that some Governments tend to avoid frank and constructive conversations on the question of radicalization. Hiding the problem, however, is counterproductive. Fostering public debate, on the other hand, can encourage young people to vent their frustrations before they succumb to extremist ideologies and can assist the State to articulate policies accordingly. Failure to bring the problem to public discussion may imply disinterest on the part of States, fear or both, while encouraging debate will ordinarily promote collective confidence and deeper mutual understanding among the various ethnic, racial and religious components of society. This dialogue can lead to the formulation of Government policies of which all members of a society can claim collective ownership and offer young people convincing counter-narratives to extremist propaganda.

Indeed, balanced public policy plays a key role in facilitating solid integration of immigrants in society as citizens. Policies that discourage xenophobic or racist perceptions are much needed because they contribute to the observance of healthy religious and sociocultural values. Religion constitutes a potent part of these value systems. Policies and education that seek to minimize or eliminate the faith component of individual and collective identities could leave the young disoriented, alienated, marginalized or excluded and prone to the message of extremist groups. There is no doubt that the catchwords and slogans used by extremist groups to recruit young people often involve distorted religious and sociocultural values.

Unemployment and despair also lie behind the vulnerability of many young people to the propaganda and manipulations of extremist recruiters. Idle

minds and hands are highly vulnerable to extremist ideologies. Thus, global economic inequalities and the marginalization and exclusion from development to which they lead are not only a grave social and economic concern but can become a threat to international peace and security. Achieving social justice is therefore key to countering the phenomenon of young people joining extremist organizations.

In our fight against extremist ideologies and our efforts to promote a culture of peace, young people themselves are a most precious resource. We can counter extremist recruiters by promoting voices that are trusted and respected among their peers on the very platforms they use to recruit new members, like the social media.

Finally, faith leaders and organizations must condemn messages of hate in the name of religion and provide young people with religious education that fosters understanding and respect between peoples of different faiths. People of faith have a grave responsibility to condemn those who seek to detach faith from reason and who instrumentalize faith as a justification for violence. As Pope Francis emphasized during his visit to Albania on 21 September 2014, no one should consider oneself "to be the 'armour' of God while planning and carrying out acts of violence and oppression".

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Croatia.

Mr. Drobnjak (Croatia): I would like to pay tribute to Jordan for convening this important and timely debate.

Croatia aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the Head of the Delegation of the European Union. I will now make some remarks in my national capacity.

Allow me to share with the Security Council words of wisdom from young people we had the pleasure to hear from last week in our capital, Zagreb. These words were accompanied by a memorable performance when, at 14:07, hours on 16 April, 147 students lay on the ground in front of the Croatian National Theatre in the centre of Zagreb and remained motionless for exactly 147 seconds. With this act, Croatian students wanted to draw public attention to the tragedy that happened in Kenya on 2 April, when 147 students were heinously murdered on their university campus. Croatian students, paying respect to their perished colleagues, sent the message from which I will borrow several important sentences:

> "Without proper communication, differences lead to misunderstanding, misunderstanding leads to conflict, and conflict to tragedy ... What made those 147 students different? Being Christians? ... We believe that race, religion, ethnicity and orientation are irrelevant when talking about human rights. They are universal, but unfortunately vulnerable ... The Kenyan tragedy reminds us that the safety that we take for granted is a luxury to others."

Many important and wise words have been shared with us here today. We are proud to add to today's debate these several lines, the voice of our youth. We are encouraged by their yearning for committed actions against violence, intolerance and all forms of discrimination. Youth can be at the very core of the solution for violent extremism. Young people can serve as positive role models and should embrace this role without hesitation. They can influence and inspire their peers, raise public awareness and encourage a broader discussion within a society.

However, in order for the young generation to be capable of doing that, we must enable them to develop all their potential in that regard. Violence is often rooted in fear, prejudice and, ultimately, ignorance. That is why education is paramount and should be inextricably coupled with guaranteeing safety and security for our youth. Knowledge and education are among the most powerful tools for fostering tolerance and open-mindedness. They are powerful weapons for fighting against hate speech and ignorance that are so often leading to insecurity and violence. It is insight and information that foster common understanding and lead to the development of confident and strong young individuals, unsusceptible to the darkness of hate. By doing this, we are strengthening the social fabric of every society and of the global community.

What many present-day crisis areas have in common, besides suffering and misery brought by armed conflicts, is that they encompass some of the youngest societies in the world. The average age in some of these countries is below 18 years. We should not treat this as just another statistical fact. Today, when we are challenged with the escalating threats of terrorism and radicalism, we must focus on providing for the needs of the young generation and strengthen their sense of feeling both safe and included. We must enable them to be heard and allow them to acquire

intercultural competencies with which they can understand and appreciate diversity both within their societies and globally. And we must provide young people with jobs — youth unemployment is a problem that goes way beyond being just an economic category. Unemployment takes away perspective for the future. Lack of perspective is among the worst kinds of poverty; it causes a society of peace and tolerance to erode from within.

Today's topic cannot be addressed thoroughly without taking into account the development component. Only with a holistic, multidisciplinary approach, which includes the implementation of the adequate development policies and legislative frameworks, education and inclusive work with a number of stakeholders such as academia, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, religious authorities and media, can we achieve sustainable results in countering terrorism and in promoting peace. Our policies must therefore be exemplary and all-inclusive, eliminating all inequalities, both social and economic, in our societies.

By tackling issues such as political and social discrimination, exclusion and marginalization, we are doing our utmost to prevent the further recruitment of new terrorists. By spreading and nurturing education, knowledge, tolerance, interfaith and intercultural understanding, we can give a significant blow to the misleading narratives and ideologies of violent extremism and terrorism. In this regard, States also have an obligation to stimulate and strengthen cooperation with civil society and its capacity to tackle the challenges of violent extremism and any form of radicalization.

Finally, let us be mindful of the fact that it is today that we plant the seeds for a better future.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Malta.

Mr. Grima (Malta): At the outset, I would like to express my appreciation to the Jordanian presidency of the Security Council for its leadership in addressing an issue to which my Government attaches particular importance. Malta also aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier on behalf of the European Union.

Violent extremism is not a new phenomenon, but the recent dramatic surge in extreme violent acts by individuals and groups has thrust the issue to the top of the international agenda. For that reason, today's debate provides a most welcome opportunity to discuss the issue from a youth perspective and share initiatives and best practices with one another.

Technological progress and the modern media have ensured that the violent extremist narrative can have a virtually global reach. No longer confined to specific countries or regions, this phenomenon is fast becoming one of the most pressing contemporary challenges. More and more violent extremists and radicals turn to modern media to spread their extremist messages. More technologically savvy young people therefore naturally find themselves at greater risk of this threat. By the same token, however, through good use of the media, young people have a particular role to play in countering the extremist narrative and rejecting it.

Violent extremism feeds on people's desperation. Young people, often experiencing isolation, exclusion and deprivation, are particularly vulnerable to the designs of extremist groups or individuals who seek to exploit their vulnerabilities, playing on their anxieties and insecurity. A better understanding of the needs, aspirations and circumstances of young people therefore becomes an essential tool for addressing that challenge. More inclusive, tolerant societies, in which no one — especially young people — feels left behind or marginalized, are just as important. That requires a participatory approach in which young people feel part of the society to which they belong by also actively contributing to its socioeconomic development.

There is perhaps no better way to achieve this than by empowering our younger generation through education, including education in tolerance and non-discrimination. Education is the key to providing young people with the knowledge and skills that will ultimately empower them to reject violent extremism. That has always been the view of my Government and is the underlying factor in the national youth policy framework that we have adopted for the period 2015 to 2020. The framework addresses this phenomenon first by supporting and encouraging young people in fulfilling their potential and aspirations while addressing their needs and concerns, and secondly by upporting young people as active and responsible citizens who fully participate in and contribute to the social, economic and cultural life of their nation and Europe.

Malta has an array of programmes and initiatives aimed at empowering young people and promoting and supporting the social inclusion of minorities,

cultural, religious or ethnic, as well as that of young people with fewer opportunities. The programmes range from national initiatives to others that are implemented in conjunction with the European Union and other international partners. They aim to promote integration, awareness and tolerance among the various sectors of Maltese society, including refugees and migrants who have obtained subsidiary protection. The Government implements them through partnerships with non-governmental organizations and the European Refugee Fund. It is important that young people be provided with avenues in which to channel their energy, enthusiasm and talent. The performing arts can make an important contribution to inter-cultural dialogue and are one of the tools we use to facilitate social cohesion and interaction between different segments of society.

Malta believes that one effective way to counter violent extremism is by strengthening the rule of law and the judiciary in States. Addressing root causes is crucial, and we are firmly convinced that effective counter-extremism strategies should be linked to promoting and protecting human rights and sustainable development. Malta is the proud host of the International Institute on Justice and the Rule of Law, established in June of last year. One of the objectives behind its creation is countering violent extremism through the rule of law and criminal justice by providing rule-of-law-based training to lawmakers, police, prosecutors, judges, corrections officials and other justice-sector stakeholders. Given its geographic location, the Institute is paying particular attention to supporting countries in transition in North, West and East Africa and the Middle East. We believe that such initiatives could serve as a regional catalyst to counter terrorism, radicalization and violent extremism among young people as well.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Kazakhstan.

Mr. Abdrakhmanov (Kazakhstan): At the outset, I would like to pay tribute to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II of Jordan for convening this timely meeting on the important role of young people, who are both victims and perpetrators of violence, in combating extremism and promoting peace. I also thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive briefing and acknowledge with appreciation the efforts of Mr. Ahmad Alhendawi, his Envoy on Youth, in mobilizing young people to engage in peace processes.

Discontent and radicalism among young people today arise, in particular, from poverty and a sense of hopelessness. The stark statistics of unemployment call for a coordinated regional and global effort to generate job-creating economies by the United Nations system and its country teams, together with regional groups. Such measures must be put into practice at the national level, and in that context I would like to mention some initiatives that have been developed in my country.

Kazakhstan has adopted a State programme that we call a Road Map to Employment, which enables young people across the country to obtain free education and vocational training while focusing on intensive job creation and fostering entrepreneurship and microcredit. We have also made provisions for health care, including mental health, social facilities and housing for young people, aimed at ensuring social stability. Such services are part of our new economic policy, Nurly Zhol, or Path for the Future.

We believe that investing in people- and youth-centred development is crucially important if we are to win an ideological war. Kazakhstan has launched a key national programme on countering religious extremism and terrorism for the period 2013 to 2017, allocating some $600 million for preventive measures, including among our youth population. Our goal is to defeat the intangible causes that create a fertile environment for the growth of extremism and to foster young people's sound physical, psychological, cultural and spiritual development. We want to utilize mass media to help to transform young people's attitudes in the interests of fostering harmony. My country's youth congress today comprises active movements and organizations that are shaping policy directives on young people. We have developed a counter-narrative approach in the Government's numerous activities designed to dissuade young people from using violence to serve extremist causes and to work for peace instead.

Being a multi-ethnic and multi-religious nation, Kazakhstan enjoys peace and stability, since it has always worked to make tolerance and respect its guiding principles. What is perhaps most important in this ideological struggle is addressing the emotional and spiritual needs of young people who feel defeated and angry. In Kazakhstan we are trying to provide educational and peace programmes that give young people the opportunity to interact with genuine religious leaders who treat them with respect, addressing their needs through round tables, dialogues and seminars.

The vulnerability and strengths of young people will be discussed at the Fifth Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, to be held in Astana in June on the theme of political and religious leaders for peace and development. The overall outcome recommendations should add to United Nations and multilateral thinking on rapprochement among civilizations.

In conclusion, I would like to assure the Council of Kazakhstan's readiness to participate in multilateral action aimed at transforming our young people's lives so that they may become responsible leaders in the promotion of peace, stability and prosperity.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Canada.

Mr. Grant (Canada) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the Government of Canada, I congratulate the Jordanian presidency for organizing this important debate today. Canada is pleased to participate in the discussion and has joined the growing number of countries concerned about the issue of violent extremism. It is undoubtedly one of the main threats to global security.

(*spoke in English*)

Canada is among many other nations concerned with the reality in which our citizens, including our young people, can be radicalized to violence or decide to travel abroad to participate in terrorist activities. I would like to outline how Canada is tackling this challenge. At the same time, I would like to note that we are participating in today's meeting to learn from other nations, as sharing information and best practices is crucial in this respect.

Addressing violent extremism is a challenge that demands comprehensive action on many fronts and across Government departments. First, it demands strong legislative measures to strengthen our national security. Indeed, we recently took an important step forward in this regard by introducing the anti-terrorism act. This legislation will address terrorism on a number of fronts, including creating a new offense of advocating or promoting terrorism generally, and providing for the ability to remove terrorist propaganda from our domestic web servers.

Secondly, and more germane to our discussions today, the challenge of violent extremism demands concerted and sustained efforts at all levels to build resilience within communities. This is an area in which I am proud to say that Canada is actively engaged. In fact, prevention is a key component of Canada's counter-terrorism strategy.

Canada believes strongly in the importance of preventing individuals — including our young people — from radicalizing to violence before they cross the line into terrorist criminal activity. Young people are both potential recruits and interveners in the radicalization process. It is therefore critical that they be meaningfully engaged so that they can be part of the solution.

How is Canada working to achieve just that? First, much important work is being done by numerous Government departments and agencies to empower and educate youth. We work in partnership with communities to build mutual trust and understanding — a foundation from which we can collectively take action to prevent radicalization at home and in the broader global community. Broadly speaking, our efforts are anchored by research, community outreach and meaningful engagement and by building a tailored, whole-of-government intervention.

Canada's development assistance also supports efforts to ensure safe and secure environments for children and youth so that they can contribute meaningfully to society. That includes efforts to create opportunities for youth-at-risk to find alternatives to violence and crime and become engaged as positive members of their societies.

Domestically, our work with leaders through the Cross-Cultural Roundtable on Security helps us to engage with communities across Canada and to initiate frank and open discussions around the conditions conducive to the spread of violent extremism.

Our efforts are paying off in a number of large cities across Canada where communities have begun to identify points of intervention and local community-driven action plans. In a series of workshops called Deepening the Dialogue, we use first-hand experiences to engage with young people. The approach challenges the audience to reflect on radicalization leading to violence in the context of their own communities. We work with them to identify opportunities for individual and community interventions and resources before an individual crosses the threshold to violent extremism. We are convinced that such exercises will do much to strengthen the resilience of communities.

(*spoke in French*)

Preventing violent radicalization is a collective responsibility. Citizens, families, religious leaders, police, the Government and, of course, communities all have a role to play.

While the primary responsibility for responding to violent extremism lies with the individual States, the United Nations plays a crucial role in facilitating and promoting coordination and coherence in the implementation of various tools and strategies at national, regional and international levels and in assisting Member States.

We encourage States to support multilateral efforts in the fight against terrorism, such as the Hedayah Centre, which was established by the Global Counterterrorism Forum. It is the first international centre dedicated to training, dialogue, research and collaboration in the fight against violent extremism. Canada welcomed the launch of the Hedayah Centre and is pleased to support its work.

As mentioned in my opening remarks, Canada is here to share its experience and to listen and learn from others. We recognize that every nation has a particular experience, but we all share common basic principles. We must ensure that the lines of communication are open and that the international community works together on all fronts. It is the only way to effectively deal with such a threat. With a significant commitment, young people can be a powerful force to help create a more peaceful and secure world.

(*spoke in English*)

Canada has benefited greatly from hearing the perspectives of the Member States participating in today's debate. I again thank the Jordanian presidency for the convening of this meeting.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Albania.

Mr. Nina (Albania): Albania aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the observer of the European Union. Allow me to make some remarks in my national capacity.

We appreciate the opportunity to take part in this open debate and would like to thank the President for organizing it. It offers us a real opportunity to further our discussions on this very important topic following the summit on countering violent extremism convened by President Obama, back in February. We also thank the presidency for its concept paper (S/2015/231, annex) in preparation for this debate.

The reality check is bleak and painful. The year 2014 has been a devastating one for millions of children, and 2015 is in no way better. According to UNICEF, hundreds of millions of children live in countries and areas affected by armed conflict, and an estimated 15 million children are directly caught up in violent conflicts in different countries. Never in recent memory have so many children been subjected to the unspeakable brutalities we have heard of recently.

The world has always been prone to conflict — otherwise seen as the pursuit of contrary or seemingly incompatible interests — but as we have seen, its nature has fundamentally changed during the past two decades. While in modern times relations among nations have managed to prevent direct inter-State conflicts — with a few notable exceptions, as evidenced by those in Georgia and Ukraine — the number of intra-State conflicts fuelled by ethnic, religious or other differences and grievances have increased. While in the context of strong governance and robust social and political systems conflicting interests are managed and ways are found for groups to peacefully pursue their goals, in fragile situations with poor governance and weak political and social systems, grievances, disputes and competition for resources can turn violent with disastrous consequences.

Children living in conflict areas are a direct and easy target of violent and extremist groups. Terrorist groups, in particular Al-Qaida, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram, have taken full advantage of the overall security situation in different parts of the world and are not only trying, but are, rather successfully, managing to indoctrinate children in extremist ideology. Sadly, reports also describe recurrent cases of abductions of children by those groups, who are then trained as fighters.

Regrettably, the recruitment of children is not confined to areas of conflict. Through the Internet, and especially via social media, people are now more interconnected than ever before to other people and subjected to their ideas. We feel increasingly powerless in noticing how traditional links, including to family, are undermined by profit-driven, unwarranted external influences, which have been strengthened.

Economic hardship, disillusionment, exclusion, discrimination and marginalization — especially among the vulnerable and disadvantaged — will inevitably lead individuals, in particular youth, to seek solutions outside the exhausted traditional ones, thereby becoming easy targets of extremist ideology, religious radicalization and exploitation. There is no doubt that radicalization and violent extremism, especially among young people, are one of today's, and for that matter tomorrow's, most pressing challenges to peace, stability and development.

As amply highlighted in yesterday's discussion in the General Assembly, while acknowledging that extremism is fuelled by various factors and has complex roots, the abhorrent and catastrophic acts of nebulous terrorist groups have placed religious extremism at the centre of world debate, and religious leaders on the front line with regard to their influence, role and responsibility in influencing developments in society, alongside the family, schools, communities and other important actors.

Countering violent extremism in today's fast-changing multicultural and multiconfessional societies requires a completely renewed and optimal focus on a wide range of issues. It should bring together good governance, the rule of law, respect for human rights across the board, sustainable economic growth with opportunities for all, accountable institutions, and the involvement of young people and women and education, and including, indispensably, work in the community.

Education is beyond any doubt one of the most powerful tools for providing the younger generation with the keys to its future. We must continue, within or outside conflict areas and their neighbouring countries, to seriously invest in the kind of education needed not only for opening minds and providing knowledge, but for providing the kind of empowerment that provides the necessary tools to build a new life.

But reality forces us to admit that schooling alone may prove to be insufficient and sometimes too little, too late in the struggle against terrorist groups and their increased influence. The long and challenging fight against extremism will be won only by successfully combining a wide variety of tools; by successfully countering extremist ideologies and changing mindsets; and by engaging all stakeholders in contributing to building a better society for all. Otherwise, we may end up fighting long and protracted battles against this scourge.

Albania participated in and welcomes the results of the White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism, organized in February in Washington, D.C., and we are fully committed to doing our part while working closely with our partners and allies. To this end, we are happy to organize in Tirana, on 19 to 20 May, the first regional follow-up meeting to the White House Summit. We will be glad to share the conclusions of that meeting with the wider United Nations membership.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I give the floor to the representative of Indonesia.

Mr. Anshor (Indonesia): Let me begin by expressing the appreciation of my delegation to Jordan for convening this open debate. We also recognize the presence of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II, who was here to preside over the debate this morning.

My delegation fully agrees that there is a need to address with urgency the rise of radicalization and violent extremism among youth. Young people make up a large share of the world population. In various ways, they shape our political, social, cultural and economic development. It has been said quite correctly that young people are our future. Today's young people, however, are confronted by many obstacles to realizing their aspirations. These include discrimination, marginalization, unemployment and lack of access to education, which severely limit their potential. We share the view that such situations can provoke disillusionment among young people and raise the possibility of their being lured into embracing extreme views.

It is therefore quite obvious that, in the projection of our long-term programme to counter extremism, we must find ways to empower young people as a critical component of our preventive measures in the fight against terrorism. It must be noted, however, that extremism is a complex phenomenon, involving not only physical acts but also ideas. Addressing the social and economic conditions of youth must therefore be followed by a comprehensive programme to fight the philosophies of hatred and intolerance that lead people, including youth, to extremism.

On that account, Indonesia's efforts in countering extremism have consistently followed two different but mutually reinforcing approaches: a hard approach and a soft approach. The hard approach entails law

enforcement measures, while the soft approach seeks to influence the hearts and minds of people. From our own experience in countering extremism, there are at least three lessons that my delegation wishes to share with the Council.

The first is the need to prioritize the building of a resilient community, which is a community that is outward-looking and receptive to new ideas, and seeks the good of all. A resilient community is our first line of defence against the spread of the ideas of hatred and intolerance. To help in building and strengthening community resiliency, my Government aligns itself with the moderates, including religious groups and leaders, youth organizations and the mass media. Together, we have been persistent in our message of peace and mutual respect. This method, we believe, strengthens communal ownership and responsibility. Extremism and terrorism are a global threat, but the fight against them must take advantage of local characteristics and potential.

Second is the need to foster dialogue, which contributes not only to reducing suspicion and intolerance, but also to enhancing understanding. Engagement with youth through dialogue and education provides an appropriate platform to directly counter the narrative of extremism and to instil in youth the importance of diversity and respect. As an example of this programme, my Government has enlisted the support of various Islamic organizations, youth institutions and academicians to educate young people on the danger of the ideology of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, and its appeal to become a foreign terrorist fighter.

Third is the need to strengthen the network of dialogue to spread the culture of peace and tolerance at all levels, regional and global. This is vital because, in the era of globalization, young people are extremely well-connected. We must also bear in mind that extremism is increasingly being felt worldwide. No country is immune to its dangers, and the responsibility to combat it rests on the shoulders of all, both individually and collectively.

In this context, Indonesia believes that we should strengthen the existing frameworks within the United Nations to mobilize international cooperation in combating the spread of extremism among youth. Such frameworks include the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, which works to intensify the activities under its youth pillar. It is encouraging to note that at the most recent Global Forum of the Alliance, which Indonesia hosted last year, young people insisted on the importance of including cross-cultural understanding and peacebuilding in education.

To conclude, allow me to underline that countering extremism among youth must also address its pull factors, that is, those conditions by which terrorist groups continue to justify their activities. In this context, I wish to reiterate that prolonged and unresolved conflicts are capable of creating situations that are conducive to the spread of extreme and radical views. History shows that terrorists groups have exploited such situations to recruit and groom new converts, as we have seen in current events in the Middle East and Africa.

That fact only underlines the urgent need for the Council to resolve conflicts throughout the world, and help bring peace and prosperity. The Council should be part of the systematic response of the whole United Nations system that we are now developing, to strengthen our common efforts to prevent and address youth involvement in violent extremism. We also believe that the Council should align its works in this regard with the United Nations development framework, which places emphasis on inclusive development for countries emerging from conflict.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I give the floor to the representative of Poland.

Mr. Winid (Poland): Poland aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union. I would like to add a few comments in my national capacity.

Let me first thank you, Sir, for convening this timely debate. It gives us an opportunity to reflect on the key issue of the radicalization of youth, which is an increasingly challenging aspect of the fight against extremism. The importance of this topic was also underlined during this week's high-level meeting of the General Assembly.

I would like to highlight the role, sometimes heroic and very tragic, of young individuals in our collective struggle against terrorism. Just this Monday, Captain Ahmed Salam and two other brave Egyptian soldiers paid the ultimate price when they were killed by a roadside bomb in the Sinai peninsula. Their devoted patriotism did not differentiate among faith, tribal or ethnic backgrounds. We pay tribute to their heroism. Responsibility for this act of terror was claimed by an affiliate of the so-called Islamic State. Thiat terrorist

organization also runs the most effective campaign of attracting youth from all over the world. Fighting this evil propaganda is a key element of a successful campaign against extremism.

The United Nations Global Counterterrorism Strategy identifies in its first pillar the socioeconomic conditions that are conducive to the spread of radicalism. Unemployment, the lack of education and prospects for personal development are among the major factors that make young people so vulnerable to propaganda. Terrorists offer them an illusion of security and power. As is rightly stated in the concept paper (S/2015/231, annex) prepared by Jordan for this debate, violent extremist groups very effectively exploit these weaknesses. Their cynical propaganda takes advantage of youth's economic struggle and idealism. These problems do not, however, affect only young people in certain regions of the world, struck by conflict and poverty. This ideology is also advancing in rich and developed countries. The issue of social exclusion is a worldwide challenge that has to be better addressed by the international community.

To adequately address the challenge posed by radicalism, we need to apply holistic approach. The focus has to be put on education and promoting interreligious dialogue to counter the idea of the so-called clash of civilizations that is being spread by extremists and greatly contributes to the radicalization of youth. Bearing in mind that one should not establish a false direct link between Islam and radicalism, we welcome the very wise voice of Sheikh Ahmed al-Tayeb, Grand Imam of Cairo's Al-Azhar University. Let me recall his February speech in Mecca, in which he condemned terrorism, linking extremism to "bad interpretations" of the Koran and the life of the Prophet Muhammad.

Another very good example of a valuable contribution to countering radicalism is the comprehensive strategy implemented by Morocco. It includes, among other things, an innovative programme of training for imams, which begun in 2008 and was recently reinvigorated by the opening of the Mohammed VI Institute for the Training of Imams in Rabat. Instead of military operations to mitigate the effects of extremism, Morocco has identified a powerful tool to address its root causes.

A long-term, concerted effort is needed to limit the involvement of youth in violent extremism. There is a direct link between security, development and education. This is why I echo the call for better coordination among all United Nations bodies active in the field of countering terrorism. At the same time, the Security Council and the international community have to do more to bring an end to the conflicts that destabilize the Middle East and fuel radicalism. No country is safe from the threat of extremism. It is in our common interest to effectively respond to this challenge.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I give the floor to the representative of Portugal.

Mrs. Pucarinho (Portugal): I thank you, Sir, for convening this open debate on the role of youth in countering violent extremism and promoting peace, as well as Mr. Neumann and Mr. Atran for their insightful briefings.

The world currently has the largest generation of young people in its history — over 1.2 billion, representing one-fourth of the total population. Youth has always been and will always be the driving force of social, political and economic change, and require respect for their fundamental freedoms and rights, improved conditions for themselves and their communities, opportunities to learn, decent work and participation in making decisions that affect them. Most of all, young people strive for feasible means to ensure the achievement of their hopes and dreams.

Young people are agents, beneficiaries and victims of major societal changes, and are often confronted by the apparent paradox of seeking to be integrated into an existing order or to serving as a force of transformation of that same order. Those two aspects are, however, not incompatible as long as young people can direct their vitality in directions leading to positive advancements and beneficial changes to the whole of society. Young people absorb and reflect social, economic and political realities. The response to the nexus between youth and violent extremism requires an understanding of the specific framework of their insertion, especially when they live in societies under stress, along with the complexities of the period of transition to adulthood.

In countries at war, young people are more prone to recruitment into extremist groups, often by coercive enforcement. As we have been able to establish more recently, even in countries that are not involved in conflict young people may be drawn into violent extremism, partly due to a sense of marginalization and/or social and economic exclusion. Ultimately, the absence of kinship

and belonging, alienation and disfranchisement renders young people more susceptible to violent extremism. In globalized societies, the increased use by terrorists and their supporters of information and communication technologies, in particular the Internet and social networks, to incite, recruit, fund and eventually plan terrorist acts, the dissemination of a narrative of glory and sense of empowerment are only one computer click away.

The international debate and fight against the scourge of violent extremism must go beyond the paradigm of the war on terrorism and involve a preventive policy model with a human rights-based approach. Addressing the threat posed by extremist non-State armed groups and terrorists to young people requires a comprehensive and multidimensional approach to its underlying factors, such as poor living conditions, limited or unequal access to education, lack of employment or sustainable livelihood, social exclusion and inequality, weak political participation, previous exposure to violence, and a lack of public safety and security.

On the other hand we must also engage in an effective communication strategy to prevent radicalization and the evolution from there to terrorism. That would help in suppressing the flow of foreign fighters by promoting a counter-narrative to extremism and its fake promises of glory. The issue of youth and violent extremism cuts across mandates and across peace, security and development agendas. The magnitude of the problem requires it to be globally addressed, a multidimensional and cross-cutting approach and the involvement of States, international and regional organizations, religious communities, civil society, media representatives and, most importantly, young people themselves.

Portugal has been a firm and consistent supporter of the United Nations youth agenda, and strongly believes that the World Programme of Action for Youth, adopted 20 years ago by consensus at the General Assembly, continues to offer the apposite response to the serious challenges faced today by the young population, as it provides Member States with a blueprint containing practical guidelines for action at the national and for international support in improving the situation of young people. Portugal also looks forward to the Secretary-General's plan of action on countering violent extremism.

If we are to protect youth against violent extremism, we must make use of all instruments at our disposal, and there is no greater tool than education. We consider it crucial to promote a culture of peace, justice and human development, ethnic and religious tolerance, and respect for all religions and cultures by establishing suitable and inclusive educational programmes. In that regard, Portugal believes that platforms like the Alliance of Civilizations can play a key role, including through intra- and interfaith dialogue. The debate on promoting tolerance and practical strategies to counter extremism should deconstruct the false claim of terrorists and extremists that religion is their guide, since their ideologies and practices lack foundations and are even contrary to the teachings of any major faith.

At the regional level, initiatives that foster mutual understandingand intercultural dialogue and build bridges among cultures, with a particular emphasis on youth, should be most welcome. In that regard, the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe provides a good example of regional cooperation that brings together youth from both hemispheres and creates conditions to mitigate the appeal of terrorism and violent extremism. Investing in good policies and programmes to create enabling environments for youth to prosper, fulfil their potential, enjoy their human rights and engage as responsible social actors is key to a successful collective strategy against the dissemination of violent extremism.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of the United Arab Emirates.

Mrs. Nusseibeh (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for convening this important debate and for his valuable statement. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General and the previous speakers for their insights today.

The United Arab Emirates fully shares the view of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan that young people should be seen not only as victims, but also as agents in building and delivering a positive agenda that counters extremism and violence and offers hope in the wake of the destructive war waged by the forces of intolerance and hatred. Many speakers today have noted the range of socioeconomic root causes that might make youth vulnerable to recruitment and radicalization. These include the significant and growing "youth bulge"

globally and the stress it is placing on basic services such as education, unemployment, perceptions of injustice, individual alienation or community grievances.

In the Middle East region, the unresolved and brutal conflicts in countries such as Syria, Iraq, Libya and Yemen, and the long-standing Israeli occupation, have led to further violence and fractured the global security order. These crises have left political vacuums, which have exacerbated extremism, leading to spillover effects that have destabilized the entire region.

From the perspective of the United Arab Emirates, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) exploits all of the factors described today in order to draw young people towards them to wage war against innocent civilians. Inflicting human suffering in the name of religion is a clear violation of Islamic teaching and doctrine. Considerable financial, communications and travel support networks that span the world sustain ISIL and other extremist and terrorist organizations. Those recruited as foreign fighters in Syria by ISIL come from more than 90 countries. More thorough research is required to identify and address the full range of drivers of the form of extremism that confronts us.

The United Arab Emirates has developed a comprehensive strategy to implement its vision regarding the importance of severing the links through which youth move towards extremism and our conviction that youth are the primary resource in building our nation. The strategy rests on the following pillars: support for the equal right to education, including girls; encouraging critical thinking in the educational process; building a knowledge economy that promotes innovation and prepares young people for the modern labour market; and encouraging our youth to take leadership and greater responsibilities in all areas.

Our strategy also focuses on denying the use of social media as a propaganda and recruitment tactic. We recently launched the United Arab Emirates-United States Anti-Daesh Online Operations Centre to counter the exploitation of online media through monitoring and analysis, and proposing credible religious counter-narratives. Additionally, we promote the values of tolerance and moderation by partnering with respected religious leaders and academic institutions. For example, in Afghanistan, the United Arab Emirates has invested $20 million in a programme that provides imams in rural areas with training in the true and moderate teachings of Islam. In Abu Dhabi, we have established the Muslim Council of Elders to promote Islam's peaceful values and teachings worldwide.

Furthermore, we support youth throughout our region, particularly in conflict-affected and transitional countries. We partner with national and international organizations to provide high quality health-care and education services for refugees from Syria and Iraq. And we remain firmly committed to providing full support to Egypt through youth-focused programmes. As Egypt is home to 30 per cent of the youth population of the Middle East and North Africa today, we firmly believe that Egypt's stability is the cornerstone of the region's stability.

I would like to propose some recommendations to the international community in countering extremism in the long-term.

First, we must deny the conditions on the ground that allow extremism to spread in transitional States. When mass atrocities take place, we should take swift and collective action through the Security Council. Secondly, we should utilize the existing and emerging legal frameworks to counter extremist recruitment and financing channels, and ensure the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions. Thirdly, we should encourage long-term investments in education and health, especially in humanitarian and fragile settings. Fourthly, we should develop programmes that empower mothers to serve as the first line of defence for families and children against misperceptions and extremist thinking.

We must recognize the nexus between the development and security agendas, prioritize our commitments to young people and address their economic, political and social concerns. Let us unite in support of the more than 1.8 billion young people globally to help them meet their aspirations and develop a better future, together.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Azerbaijan.

Ms. Mammadova (Azerbaijan): At the outset, I would like to thank the Jordanian presidency for convening today's important and timely debate on the role of youth in countering extremism and promoting peace.

In recent years, the youth dimension has emerged as a critical factor in global counter-terrorism efforts. Terrorist organizations often grow their ranks by

recruiting young people who have a need to belong. In this context, it is particularly alarming to observe that the forced recruitment trend is shifting towards adherence and that youth are voluntarily joining terrorist organizations for ideological and/or socioeconomic reasons. Pseudoreligious and warrior ideologies have become an effective recruitment tactic, and with the growth of social media and virtual platforms, developed and developing countries alike are facing an increasing risk of radicalization in their societies.

If we are to effectively prevent, protect and reintegrate youth, we need to better understand the triggers and catalysts of extremism. Among them, the following factors appear to be common and pertinent to different settings.

Unresolved, protracted conflicts and foreign military occupation undermine the common belief in the rule of law, human dignity and human life. Such situations, accompanied by the weak capacity of affected States to control and address the ensuing risks create a climate of instability, injustice and impunity. A broader lack of opportunities, in particular socioeconomic deprivation, leads to an increased sense of insecurity and despair. Thus, a focus on economic and employment factors is key to countering the motivation and strategy of recruiters, and to rewarding the resilience of youth and societies at large to radicalization.

Racism and related intolerance can permeate social marginalization and encourage youth to search for a new, radical identity. Intercultural and interfaith dialogue is essential to promoting mutual respect and peaceful coexistence. Ignorance drives extremism, not religion. Education is vital to curbing this scourge and to fostering a culture free from discrimination, prejudice and stigma. It is important to pursue youth policy work in a holistic manner and from multi-stakeholder perspective, and to advance youth priorities at all levels.

The youth population is growing all over the world, and it grows it is ever more critical to design response measures that enable young people to become productive, rather than destructive members of their communities. My country, Azerbaijan, seeking to make a practical contribution to youth policy development and its implementation with and for youth, in October 2014 hosted the first-ever Global Forum on Youth Policies. The global event was organized at the initiative of the Secretary-General, in partnership with his Envoy on Youth, the United Nations Development Programme, UNESCO and the Council of Europe. It brought together over 700 representatives from 165 countries, with the active participation of ministers responsible for youth, as well as experts, youth advocates, civil society representatives.

The Forum adopted the Baku Commitment to Youth Policies, which, inter alia, calls for further promoting and supporting the implementation of the World Programme for Action on Youth, establishing a global initiative on youth policies to support their development and implementation, fostering partnerships that enable inclusive and multi-stakeholder involvement in youth policies, among other initiatives.

The United Nations has an important role play in promoting policies that can create and provide the resources youth need to become active local and global citizens. In this respect, this year represents a unique opportunity to promote synergies between youth policies and broader development policies and frameworks, particularly in the context of the post-2015 development agenda and the means of its implementation.

In conclusion, I would like once again to reiterate our appreciation to the delegation of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for convening this important debate. As is often said in the Security Council, we all shall remain seized of this acute matter.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

Mr. Yeremenko (Ukraine): My delegation would like to express sincere gratitude to Jordan for organizing this high-level debate on the role of youth in countering violent extremism and promoting peace.

Extremism and terrorism nowadays pose a serious threat to peace, security and stability in the world. We fully agree that there is a need to intensify our common work to address this issue and place youth at the centre of the global agenda to counter violent extremism. Radicalization among youth should be prevented and stopped, yet the achievement of this goal will be possible only through concrete strategies aimed at consolidating all existing efforts and strengthening close cooperation among all stakeholders.

The United Nations, in particular the Security Council, as well as other United Nations bodies and entities, including the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, have to play a key role in preventing violent extremism. Of high importance in this regard

is ensuring the effective implementation of resolutions 1624 (2005) and 2178 (2014).

Unfortunately, young people constitute one of the strata most vulnerable to factors leading to radicalism and extremism. There are many such factors, yet one of the most important, especially vis-à-vis youth, is propaganda. Violent extremist groups actively exploit this tool through media and social networks. In our opinion, the most dangerous situation emerges when manipulative propaganda is elevated to the rank of State priorities.

For more than a year, Ukraine has suffered from the aggression of its big neighbour, the Russian Federation. Russia has temporarily occupied and made an attempt to annex a part of the territory of Ukraine — the Autonomous Republic of Crimea — and continues hostile and subversive actions against our country in the Donbas. Still, the military component of the aggression is far from the most dangerous one. Fierce, deceitful propaganda disseminated by the State-controlled Russian media and through numerous other means is one of the key elements of the ongoing aggression against Ukraine.

The international community has to be alarmed by the fact that this Soviet-style propaganda machine works very well, first and foremost on youth. There are reported cases of teeagers participating in the activity of the pro-Russian terrorist gangs in certain areas of eastern Ukraine. Some are 15-years old and even younger. There is also credible information that the Russian-coordinated and sponsored terrorist groups are trying to force students into their ranks using different means of influence. Moreover, there is testimony that such means as promising to annul criminal records or to repay loans are practiced in the Russian campaign to recruit mercenaries into the terrorist gangs operating in the Donbas. Young people are common victims of this recruiting campaign.

Apart from comprehensive efforts to eliminate the social, economic, cultural, religious and other grounds for the spread of violent extremism among youth, the United Nations has to take the fight against the propaganda of intolerance and hatred to a new level. To reach this goal, we might need to explore ways of establishing an international mechanism to reveal such facts in real time, condemn them, and above all identify the means of discouraging those spreading such propaganda. As a country experiencing first-hand the grave consequences of such vicious propaganda coming from its neighbour, Ukraine is ready to actively contribute to taking this initiative forward.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I give the floor to the representative of Benin.

Mr. Zinsou (Benin) (*spoke in French*): Let me first congratulate Jordan on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the second time during its mandate, and to thank it for having organized this debate on the maintenance of international peace and security, with a focus on the role of youth in countering violent extremism and promoting peace. In particular I would like to thank his Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II, for his visit to New York so as to preside over this meeting. I would also like to hail his most instructive statement.

My delegation is pleased that the Security Council is focusing on the consideration of matters relating to peace and security and youth. As also stressed by other delegations, young people are prey to conflicts and extremism. The recruitment of child soldiers and the kidnapping of young girls, youths, essentially as sexual slaves are clear demonstrations of this. We have seen how recruiters from terrorist groups exploit gaps in societies so as to spread their theories and radicalize youth. Economic and social inequalities, poverty and particularly frustration arising from situations of youth unemployment, underemployment and social exclusion in double standard societies, which are increasingly elitist, where the social elevator seems to have definitely broken down, all of these things my delegation feels are circumstances and root causes leading to radicalization and the endoctrinement of young people.

My delegation therefore believes that there would be a need to invest in young people such that they can enjoy their fundamental rights and participate in decisions having to do with their own flourishing. My delegation also feels that there must be further investment in human security so as to strengthen the resiliency of populations in general and youth in particular, in order to promote private-public partnership for economies that generate employment for youth.

All of these things require good governance to accelerate economic growth, harness demographics and effectively combat poverty and inequality when distributing wealth. The judicious use of public administration is quite important to re-establishing equality and combating inequality, as peace requires inclusive development. It is Benin's hope that,

through shared prosperity, taking into account the limited resources of our planet, the implementation of the development programme from the post-2015 period, which is currently being finalized, will be a transformative one that creates conditions for States to have necessary resources that give rise to opportunities for youth and provide them with means to flourish and have faith in the political systems of their countries.

We also need to mobilize civil society so as to counter extremism wherever it may emerge. Skill and knowledge are necessary to create employment and to access universal values such as secularism, respect for human dignity and others, and acceptance of coexistence and diversity. Such education must be based on universal values, which can give youth resiliency in countering propaganda on the Internet. In this process, States will have to increasingly avoid exclusion practices such as favortism and corruption and instead choose programmes that draw upon the merits of individuals where youth can demonstrate their own skills, create and innovate for the common good of their countries.

The international community must provide means to change the situation of millions of disenfranchised youth if it does not want the rug to be pulled out from under them by religious extremists, leading to a total delegitimatization of societies by terrorist movements such as Boko Haram, the Islamic State, Al-Qaida and others. We reiterate the importance of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, one pillar of which is the elimination of conditions that lead to the spread of terrorism. The strategy must continue to be implemented by taking into account the new dimension of the issue of religious extremism.

In making its humble contribution to achieving this goal, Benin has launched the African Initiative for Education in peace, development and interreligious and intercultural dialogue. The official launching will be in Cotonou from 26 to 28 May, during the international symposium that Benin will be hosting. This is but one example of my country's efforts along those lines. The initiative is essentially to stop religious extremism in Africa by attacking its root causes, as recommended in the preambular paragraph of the UNESCO Charter. The initiative seeks to find a happy medium among religions by providing shared spaces where people can live together and exhange views. It also seeks to promote projects and innovations for harmony and to strengthen the idea of living together, social progress and balanced development which benefits all.

The African initiative will bring together various religious and secular leaders for honest dialogue has been supported by numerous partners, including the Alliance of Civilizations, UNESCO, the United Nations Development Programme and the Economic Community of West African States. Moreover, the initiative is one element of an important decision taken the twenty-fourth regular session of the Conference of Heads of State and Government of the African Union on 30 and 31 January in Addis Ababa. The General Assembly also endorsed the initiative during its adoption on 15 December 2014 of resolution 69/140 on the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace.

One of the high points of the Cotonou symposium will be the adoption of a manifesto on tolerance, dialogue and understanding. This is a new commitment that could lead to lasting peace through the strengthening of love and reason in spite of the difficulties we are encountering today. Youth will be a key stakeholder in this new approach to combating terrorism and extremism of all stripes. Benin needs the support of all to ensure that the promises of this initiative become a reality.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Zagaynov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): With your permission, we would like, at this time, to give a more detailed response to the statement made by the representative of Ukraine, all the more so since, with respect to that country, there is a great deal to say on the matter of extremism. However, contrary to what our Ukrainian colleagues believe, the issue actually is not where they say it is.

Last year, units of fighters, with the participation of representatives of radicalized youth, were intentionally used to carry out a violent coup d'état against the legally elected Government in Ukraine. Ever since then, the authorities in Kyiv have insisted on turning a blind eye to the rise of extremism, intolerance and nationalism in the country. It is difficult to imagine a more horrific confirmation of that fact than the unpunished seizure of dozens of people as hostages in Odessa in May last year. Moreover, it seems that the Kyiv authorities are intentionally creating an atmosphere of hate and

xenophobia in the country, which has, of course, had an enormous effect on young people. One need only consider, for example, at the vo'untary battalions fighting in the Donbas, with their odious inclination to Nazi ideology, made up mostly of previously radicalized youth.

What is the meaning of the law adopted by the Rada or Parliament on the status of fighters for the independence of Ukraine in the twentieth century? Those who fought on the side of the fascists in the Second World War, among them members of the Ukrainian nationalist movement and the Ukrainian rebel army, have been declared national heroes. Tens of thousands of peaceful people were killed by that army during one of the most horrific examples of ethnic cleansing in the history of Ukraine. In 1941, the so-called heroes of Ukrainian history adopted a document declaring that the newly formed Ukrainian State would closely cooperate with the great National Socialist Germany, which, under the leadership of Adolf Hitler, would create a new order in Europe and the world. Such are the views circulating in Ukraine today.

Those who do not agree with the Kyiv Government's position are called enemies of Ukraine, and the media cover up alternative points of views. There has been a wave of killings of opposition journalists and political actors. Recently, the former deputy of the Regional Party, Oleg Kalashnikov, and the Ukrainian journalist Oles Buzyna were both killed. Threats have also been made against other dissidents. There is a peace-making website with a list of individuals — with some personal information — who disagree with the wild outbursts of xenophobia in the country. Kyiv has been officially spreading such propaganda, as has been demonstrated by the statements of the advisor to the Minister for Internal Affairs, Mr. Gerashchenko.

Extremism in Ukraine is spreading in a climate of impunity. There have still not been proper investigations into the tragedies that took place in the Maidan, Odessa and Mariupol. The report of the International Advisory Panel of the Council of Europe on its investigation into the events in the Maidan described them as not in line with the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

In the light of the new approach to history, as can be seen in school textbooks, young Ukrainians can hardly avoid xenophobic or nationalistic views. It has become a regular practice to spread hate speech, as evidenced by the campaign mounted by student activists at Lviv University on 25 February in setting up the so-called corridor of shame denouncing dissident professors. We might also recall the video clips that appeared on the Internet last year that showed a large crowd of Ukrainian students chanting in the school courtyard for reprisals against Russians. The list of evidence of intolerance, radicalism and extremism in Ukraine goes on and on. However, considering the late hour, I would like to conclude with an appeal to the representative of Ukraine to seriously deal with resolving the issue of extremism and radicalism in that country. Members of the Security Council should also try to objectively understand the situation in Ukraine.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The representative of Ukraine has requested the floor to make an additional statement. I give him the floor, noting that he will not be able to make a further request.

Mr. Yaremenko (Ukraine) (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to demonstrate with some numbers the level of the so-called extremism that exists in Ukraine, which apparently only people in Russia seem to know about. Last year, two electoral campaigns were held in Ukraine. The first was to elect the President of the country, and the second to elect members of Parliament. The Russian side, at least in as far as I understand their position, seems to mean by the term "extremist" two of the political parties in Ukraine. One is called the Right Sector and the other is known as Freedom. I would like to recall that, with respect to the presidential elections, the candidate for the Right Sector, Mr. Yarash, received only 1.6 per cent of the vote, which put him in 10th place, and in 11th place with 0.7 per cent of the vote came Mr. Tyahnybok of the Freedom Party. In the parliamentary elections, in which those parties also were represented, neither of those parties made it into Parliament. I would like to stress that 29 parties participated in the parliamentary campaign.

So what kind of extremism are we talking about here? We can take a look back at history. Unfortunately, it is very difficult for me to speak about this, because my country, in recognition of this difficult page in our history, adopted a law establishing that on 8 May we remember the victims of the World War II. That is a normal and civilized approach for any State. On 9 May, we celebrate our victory.

I would also like to recall that in August 1939 the Soviet Union signed a pact with Nazi Germany with respect to the de facto division of Europe. Moreover, on 17 September the Soviet Union attacked Poland.

Then they held a joint parade in Brest to celebrate with the fascists. It is even more painful to speak about this, but on 22 March of this year, in the city of Saint Petersburg, something momentous took place: a gathering of various European ultra-radical and extreme rightist parties, about which the Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia issued the following statement. "We are extremely concerned and puzzled that permission was given for a large gathering of the most extreme nationalistic forces in Europe to be held in Saint Petersburg, a city that lived through all the horrors of the fascist blockade". The forum was attended by representatives of various ultra-nationalist parties of Europe, including such heinous parties as the Greek Golden Dawn party, the National Democratic Party of Germany, whose leader, Udo Voigt, also took part in the forum and who earlier and unambiguously stated that his party was a successor to Hitler's National Socialists. Also present were the Austrian Freedom Party; the Party of the Swedes founded by the National Socialist Front in Sweden; the British National Party, whose ex-leader, Nick Griffin, also participated in the forum and denied the Holocaust; and the Italian New Force and its leader Roberto Fiore, who calls himself a fascist. All of that was organized under the aegis of the Rodina Party or the Motherland-National Patriotic Union. So, what kind of fascism are we speaking of in Ukraine?

The President: There are no more names on the list of speakers.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.